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CONTENTS

Page
COMMENTS 365
MR. BEVIN AND THE MIDDLE EAST . . . 367
BRITAIN'S IRISH LARDER. By G. D. H. Cole . 368
A LONDON DIARY. By Critic 369
TWICE-TOLD TALE. By Sagittarius . . . 369
AS THE MINER SEES IT. By Aylmer Vallance 370
PRISON. By Sir Alexander Paterson . . . 370
"THESE CENTURY-OLD CONFLICTS." By Maurice Edelman, M.P. 371
HOPKINS. By Ritchie Calder 372

Page
THIS ENGLAND 372
THE ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT:
A Busy Week. By Desmond Shawe-Taylor 373
Cleanliness and Taste. By Roger Marvell 373
Radio Notes. By Edward Sackville West 373
The Movies. By William Whitebait . . 374
Ballet. By A. V. Coton 374
CORRESPONDENCE 375
From James S. Gregory; Douglas Garman; Louis Levy; Alan C. Don; Ritchie Calder; J. D. Solomon; and E. C.

Page
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By Raymond Mortimer . 377
REVIEWS:
Greeks in the American Empire. By R. H. S. Crossman, M.P. 378
The Separative Glass Cloak. By John Waller 378
The Lawgiver. By E. E. Kellett . . . 379
A Return Visit. By John Butler . . . 379
Hunting Shadows. By Ronald Willetts . . 380
Two Russians. By Ivan Roe . . . 381
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS 382

THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP SEA

THE wind at Margate has the habit of sitting in a chilly quarter, and the platform at this Whitsuntide Conference of the Labour Party cannot hope to bask in the same balmy air as it enjoyed at Bournemouth last year. Not that the National Executive need feel that it will have to be on the defensive against a weight of hostile criticism, still less that the occasion calls for apologetics on the part of leaders who, with resolution and ability, have pressed forward with a great legislative and administrative programme. There are some very weak spots in the Government—a fact which at Margate will, no doubt, be pointed out to Mr. Attlee, who must be already very well aware of it. There have been very serious mistakes in planning—due at least in part to a system that allows Ministers to fight for their own Departments with no adequately authoritative voice to fix priorities. There has been a quite ludicrous failure in "public relations"—a fault that Mr. Morrison now promises to change. But the Government's central problems are not due either to the poverty of personnel or to lack of publicity sense. They are the result of world facts.

The winter fuel shortage has shown how precariously full employment is balanced between the availability of manpower and the adequacy of physical resources. We have known what it is to be cold; and, when the dollar loan runs out a year hence, we may know what it is to be hungry. There will be no room at Margate for complacency. What the assembled delegates will seek is reassurance that the Government has, or intends to have, practical plans, and that it will not take refuge in the uninspiring generalisations of the statement which the National Executive issued last week-end, calling for harder work and greater productivity.

That the groundwork of any national plan must be a foreign policy which takes account of Britain's economic limitations is a fundamental proposition which is bound to underlie every discussion at Margate. If a relatively small island, which has dissipated in two wars most of its imperial wealth, and has a population whose average age is increasing, hopes to survive with an unimpaired standard of living in a still competitive world, then it must get rid of Great Power complexes which its manpower is unable to sustain. But though manpower is recognisably the bridge which leads from the large issues of foreign policy and commitments abroad to the problems of bread and butter which touch intimately every home in the country, we do not expect the Conference debates to turn predominantly on "the Bevin line." It may take more than one conciliatory speech by the Foreign Secretary in Parliament to persuade the "rebels" that a New Deal is genuinely being sought in our relations with the U.S.S.R. and the new Republics of Eastern Europe; but the crucial amendment in the Conscription Bill has gone far to appease the "rebellion." There will be insistence from some quarters that we should do more positively to dissociate ourselves from the Truman Doctrine, and that the progress of demobilisation should be speeded up to conform more quickly to the reasonably realistic Services target now accepted for 1950; but there will be much less apprehension now than would have been the case three months ago lest Socialist reconstruction at home be wrecked by pursuit of glow-worm Imperialist glory.

It is on the details of practical domestic planning that attention will be likely to fasten. And it is here that the Government is faced with a dilemma on one of whose horns it cannot avoid being impaled. The essential weakness of the *Economic Survey* was that it advocated the attainment of too many good things at once, regardless of the fact that some of the targets were mutually incompatible. More exports, yet more goods in the shops; more food, yet a higher rate of capital investment—these are rival not congruous aims. The dilemma was not faced fully by the authors of *Keep Left*. Is it appreciated by the Trade Union Congress, whose report on the *Survey*, published last week-end, criticises the Government for failing to place sufficient emphasis on the need for the re-equipment of mining and other essential industries? The point is sound. Even if further dollar credits (and their provision on tolerable terms by Congress is a remote contingency) put off the evil day when Britain's balance of foreign payments must reach equilibrium, the physical rehabilitation of a great part of British industry is a paramount need. By no other means can we survive when the present sellers' market ends. But it is idle to pretend that "ploughing back" our production in the hope of long-term gains is immediately a painless policy. The T.U.C. speaks of the possible need to economise in the expenditure of foreign exchange "on less essential items." The truth is that the list of current British imports lends itself to little paring which can be effected without trenching either on food rations or on the supplies of raw materials required for full employment. We can give the coal miners the mechanical equipment they demand, and provide the homeless with all the houses they want, if we are prepared to eat less and to have some, less essential, workers unemployed. Alternatively, we can keep up our intake of calories and avoid queues at the Labour Exchanges if we go slow on capital investment at home in order to concentrate on immediate exports.

In administrative terms, of course, the choice does not present itself so sharply: it is not a question of abandoning *all* export trade in order to concentrate on reconstruction or of forgoing *all* new houses and plant for the sake of dollars and diet. What must be decided is the emphasis and priority; and that is a decision which only the Government can take. The task for the platform at Margate is to get the "floor" to realise that, in Britain's present situation, the Government has to choose, not between two courses of action of which one will be beneficial and popular and the other unpopular and disadvantageous, but (very broadly) between two sets of plans, both of which will cause some disappointment and many privations. On the tightrope, however, between the devil and the deep sea the one fatal course is to hesitate. If the Government wants to have the assurance that it will have the Party's vigorous support behind it in difficult days ahead, it must give the Margate Conference a more assured sense that its leadership knows where it is going and why.

"Federate or Perish"

The response to Mr. Churchill's appeal for a united Europe has followed familiar lines. No thoughtful person rejects the general proposition advanced at the Albert Hall meeting; Mr. Attlee's pre-war warning that Europe must "federate or perish" has now become a truism. To-day we add that it is the world that must federate or perish. The problem is how far any partial federation will prevent the realisation of One World. Marxists have always held that wars would continue until the achievement of the World Socialist Commonwealth; and Russia to-day, by her own methods, is working towards an enlarged area of Soviet federation. Mr. Churchill proposes in effect to accept world partition, and to create a European federation which he parallels with the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A. and the British Commonwealth. He is careful to disclaim any anti-Soviet intentions. He is studiously ambiguous about the position of Britain, which is to take the lead in creating a united Europe, but which is apparently prevented from belonging to it because of her position as head of the British Commonwealth. Communists see this move solely as a confirmation of their view that Western capitalism is striving to unite against the U.S.S.R. If we judge by Soviet propaganda rather than by the words of Stalin, that is also the real basis of Soviet policy. Mr. Bevin rightly resists the appalling implications of accepting the division of the world, as opinion in the United States increasingly does, and declares that he still hopes for agreement with Moscow at the London Conference next November. If it is to succeed, the U.S. State Department, whose only idea at present is to build a new *cordon sanitaire* against Russia, will have to find a new economic and political policy. But it must be added that Russia, too, must abandon the pugnacious isolationism which she uses abroad to offset her domestic weakness. It is impossible for the most hardened supporters of the Soviet Union to accept the proposition that, because there are many among Mr. Churchill's followers who are hostile to the U.S.S.R., we must all give up our battle for the Social-Democracy which suits the West; or that, because there is a grave danger that rebuilding the Ruhr may lead to a recrudescence of militarism in Western Europe, therefore we must all go bankrupt and allow Europe to remain a "rubble heap, a charnel house, a breeding-ground for pestilence and hate."

Deadlock in Indonesia

Six weeks after the signing of the Linggadjati Agreement, there is still no economic settlement between the Indonesian and the Dutch Governments. The Dutch are mainly responsible for the delay, just as they were for the protracted political discussions; and by this delay and by blockading exports from Republican harbours they are trying to strangle the economy of the Republic. At the same time they are keeping much-needed supplies of food from the world market, including our own. Rice, soya, oils and fats are all available; but until an agreement between the Indonesians and the Dutch on economic questions, particularly on currency, has been achieved, Republican trade is at a standstill. It would be disastrous for our relations with the Indonesian Government, hitherto very friendly, if this country entered into any agreement which meant that all our trade with Indonesia had to pass through Dutch hands. But it is not only in the economic sphere that Dutch relations with the Republic have grown worse since the Linggadjati Agreement. Dutch troops are continuously arriving in the Republic and Dr. Sjahrir has asked for an early reduction. His Minister of War, Dr. Sjarifoedin, adds that his Government is prepared to reduce its military forces, but only after discussion with the Dutch. The third problem at the moment is the efforts being made by the Dutch to set up autonomous areas in parts of Indonesia not directly under Republican rule. Recently, after a great fanfare of publicity, the new State of Western Borneo was proclaimed, and the Dutch Prime Minister and Minister of Overseas Territories attended the ceremony. This is certainly calculated to undermine the authority of the Republican Government, while many Indonesians see in it a plan to develop this part of Indonesia as a competitor to their own territory. Following the opening ceremony, Abdul Hamid, Chairman of the West Borneo Council, said that the United States was interested in investing capital there.

The Dispute Over the Sudan

Egypt has announced her decision to take the dispute with Britain to Uno, and the Arab League has promised her support. The real issue is the sovereignty over the Sudan, which has been administered as a British-Egyptian condominium since 1898. The actual administration has been very largely in British hands, partly because of the scarcity of Egyptian candidates for whatever posts offered. By all accounts the Government has been efficient and progressive; it is often held up as a model for other Colonies. In recent years, in particular, a remarkable drive towards preparing the Sudanese for self-government has been undertaken—the Sudanisation of the Services, the establishment of the Advisory Council, the introduction of modern local government, scholarships for training for the highest responsibility, and so on. The Egyptians say that this policy is deliberately hostile to them, designed to encourage Sudanese independence at the expense of the unity of the Nile Valley. And, in truth, the Egyptian position must command some sympathy. The country is entirely dependent on the Nile, and the Sudan commands the upper reaches of the river. But there is no evidence at all that the bulk of the Sudanese people (many of whom are of a different religion and race) want unity with Egypt, and no assurances regarding the kind of government they will get if passed over to Egyptian hands. Yet, last year, in discussions with Sidky Pasha, Mr. Bevin recognised the sovereignty of the Egyptian Crown over the Sudan. It is true he explained that this was only reaffirming a legal position which had long existed and would involve no change in the administration; but the confidence of the Sudanese was severely shaken. They were convinced they were being betrayed—nor was the position eased when the Governor-General, Sir Hubert Huddleston, who had stoutly reassured them, and incurred the venom of the Egyptian press, was himself suddenly retired. Mr. Bevin has now told us, in the Foreign Affairs debate last week, that there was no question of selling the Sudanese in order to quieten the Egyptians. This reassurance was badly needed.

Heavy Weather at Geneva

The process of hard tariff bargaining at Geneva goes on behind closed doors. A start seems now to have been made with most of the bilateral negotiations, and the Americans are declaring that they have no intention of going home until they have both fixed up tariff arrangements all round and got the proposed Trade Charter into a final form for approval. Other delegations are less cocksure. In particular, the Robertson Bill now before Congress, under which it is proposed nearly to double the already high tariff on raw wool, has seriously upset the exporting countries—above all the British Dominions. Countries were strongly urged by the Americans themselves to make no tariff increases while the Geneva discussions were pending; but in this as in other instances the Americans appear to regard themselves as exempt from any obligation to swallow their own medicine. From the British standpoint, these little troubles are all to the good; for the less liberal the Americans show themselves to be in practice, the less obligation is there for Britain or the Dominions to give up the preferences which the Americans denounce in the name of "no discrimination." What news leaks through from Geneva does not suggest that the American negotiators were empowered to make concessions large enough to allow any great increase of manufactured goods to enter the United States market. The case of wool is even less a sign of a liberal temper, because wool is a raw material, and if other countries are not to be allowed to pay the Americans even in raw materials the entire set of assumptions underlying the Geneva discussions goes by the board.

Joint Shop Stewards

The engineering and shipbuilding unions have been in conference this week. Even without the iron and steel workers and the minor metal trades, which there is now some talk of including, their Confederation represents well over two million trade unionists and, since the accession of the A.E.U., covers the main branches of both engineering and shipbuilding pretty completely. This solidarity provides for the first time a workable basis for effective organisation at the factory level, by bringing together the shop stewards representing all the unions concerned into comprehensive works and shop committees. This comprehensiveness came into being during the war wherever Joint Production Committees were set up; but the J.P.C.s were specifically precluded from dealing with matters falling within the scope of trade union bargaining, and there has been in many factories no parallel unity among the shop stewards representing the members of the separate trade unions. Joint Shop Stewards' Committees are now fully provided for under the aegis of the Confederation, and it should be possible to forge much closer links between them and the J.P.C.s which, after being allowed to lapse in a good many establishments, are now being fairly extensively revived. This is not to say that natural jealousies and demarcation difficulties will disappear; but at any rate there will now be a better way of dealing with such troubles at the workshop level and therewith of securing fuller trade union participation in the output drive.

Freedom of the Individual

In the heat of electoral battle Mr. Churchill accused the Labour Party of wishing to establish the rule of the Gestapo. In debating the Liberal Party's Bill for the Preservation of the Rights of the Subject, the House of Lords indulged in no heated language. But the preservation of old world courtesy did nothing to disguise the fact that the Lord Chancellor tore the Liberal Bill of Rights into very small bits, and dropped them into the large wastepaper basket that must be concealed somewhere behind the Woolsack. Not that Lord Jowitt was unsympathetic to the conception of the Bill: for an important period of his varied but distinguished past he was himself a Liberal, and he shares to the full that belief in individual liberty of which all the principal parties are still equally advocates. His trouble was that this Bill is only a manifesto in disguise. Lord Layton uttered a powerful warning of the dangers to the freedom of the Press that were uncovered in the fuel crisis; other Noble Lords revived Lord Hewitt's famous plea against delegated legislation, and expressed their proper horror that men who were not policemen had the right to search our houses under the suspicion that we were hoarding black market food. Lord Jowitt was able with complete success to show that the Bill was drafted without any understanding of present-day administration; that our freedom is not endangered by measures against the black marketeer; and that the judges cannot possibly carry out to-day the body of work that has been delegated to administrative courts. He regretted, as we do, that the well-meaning people who had introduced this Bill had not seriously examined the problem and put forward some practical suggestions.

PARLIAMENT : Margate Preliminaries

Wednesday

The corridors and the Chamber have been quieter than usual this week. Most members were already, mentally, in recess. The Tories looked pre-Whitsun; the Socialists pre-Conference. Two or three Ministers could be seen walking about with an abstracted air and a professional smile as though they were already replying for the Executive at Margate.

The Debates themselves—Foreign Affairs and the Second Reading of the Finance Bill—were curiously tame, perhaps because the drama of war, which lay behind the first debate, and of economic collapse, which lay behind the second, was not stressed in their presentation.

When Bevin sat down after his first speech, a Tory intellectual said, "*Fortiter in modo, suaviter in re,*" which he translated for the benefit of a new Labour member as, "Tough in manner, mild in performance." But the Foreign Secretary's solid achievement at Moscow was less in resisting the Russians than in rejecting the advice of those who want him to slam the door, and build up a State of Western Germany. With most other speakers, Harold Macmillan, who once compared Germany to a whore competing for Allied favours, and playing one off against the other, wanted our Zone to be efficiently administered and rehabilitated. The critics of the view that it is possible to have a whole Europe with a partitioned Germany didn't catch the Speaker's eye.

What the debate lacked in excitement, it compensated for in originality. Stephen Taylor gave a psychiatrist's analysis of Anglo-Soviet relations; Follick, Don Juan's flying envoy, announced that he had breakfasted in Portugal; while Martin, a rarely heard Labour member, made the House uneasy with apocalyptic forebodings.

Walter Fletcher, the Tory member for Bury, recalled the House from spirits to rubber in the following day's debate on the Far East. With the familiarity which comes from trade and travel in those regions, he gave a series of well-informed warnings on matters ranging from Americans to smugglers. The whole House heard him with respect. John Paton and Harold Davies showed that Labour members are no less interested in the Far East than Tory specialists. But it was Rees-Williams who adjusted the scales, somewhat overtipped by Fletcher, when, from his own great experience of the East, he showed why an American Pacific, intrinsically as well as in relation to Britain, is an undesirable conception.

Sir Frank Sanderson, speaking on the Finance Bill, said: "I regard the Budget in the same light as I do Foreign Affairs." And proceeded to vote against the Bill. But, in effect, though the Tories voted against it, they had less heart in their attack on the Budget than in their criticisms of Foreign Affairs. Glenvil Hall, the Financial Secretary, introduced the Bill with a now familiar combination of great skill and attractive diffidence. Crookshank concentrated his attack on the Chancellor, whom he accused of playing politics with his new tax on undistributed profits.

"It may be," he said, "that he fancies his chances of becoming outside-left in the Government team, but I always thought his object was to be centre-forward and captain."

The two best back-bench speeches of the day were made by Diamond, an accountant who congratulated the Chancellor on bringing in the principle of differential taxation, and Mellish, Sir Ben Smith's competent successor at Rotherhithe. Mellish described how he had spoken to 2,000 poor people about the tobacco tax. He found that they understood its reason, and supported the Chancellor fully.

The Chancellor, in winding-up, was in his best knock-about mood—a Battling Belcher of the Front Bench—taking on all-comers with what his supporters consider an agreeable smile. Spearman, Eccles, Pitman and Baxter had their brief round of interruption, and retired. Despite his vast sterling debt and dollar deficit, Dalton had the comfortable air of one who is sure that he can save the country and carry the Margate Conference.

Phineas Minor

MR. BEVIN AND THE MIDDLE EAST

In his reply to the debate on foreign affairs last week Mr. Bevin remarked :

> His Majesty's Government must maintain a continuing interest in the Middle East if only because our economic and financial interests in the area are of vast importance to us and to other countries as well. I would like this issue faced quite squarely. If these interests were lost to us, the effect on the standard of life of this country would be a considerable reduction in the standard of living. Other parts of the world would suffer, too. The British interests in the Middle East contribute substantially, not only to the prosperity of the people there, but also to the wage packets of the workers in this country. Nor can we forget our old and valued friendships with the peoples of the area. I want to make this declaration from the Government point of view and from my own. I cannot be a party to an act or policy which would result in lowering the wages and purchasing power of Great Britain. Let those who want to do this be honest to their constituents and tell them what the effects of their ambitions would be on the pay packets of the people they represent.

This remarkable statement—presumably intended as an answer to the proposals of the *Keep Left* group—demands careful analysis. As the authors of *Keep Left* themselves emphasised, the Middle East is of course a vital British interest. Whereas America and Russia have domestic sources of oil, our sole source of supply is the oilfields of Persia and Iraq. To forfeit these oilfields would indeed be a national disaster, since it would not only make us dependent on oil from the New World but deprive us of an important source of dollar revenue. Indeed, it would rule out any possibility of achieving a balance of trade in the near future. On this point Mr. Bevin and his critics are in complete accord.

The real question, which Mr. Bevin completely failed to answer last Friday, is whether his policy in the Middle East during the past few years has strengthened or weakened our position, and whether the presence of a huge British army in Palestine and a considerable force in the Suez area does or does not contribute to the security of the oilfields.

In considering this question, it must be borne in mind that a Cabinet decision has already been taken which vastly reduces the size of the army available for overseas service in 1950. To-day we have over 100,000 soldiers in Palestine alone; in 1950 we shall not have more for all our imperial commitments. Mr. Alexander stated recently that conscripts under the shorter period of service will be used exclusively at home and in the British Zone of Germany. This means that only regular soldiers will be available for Empire garrisons. We can assume that the recruiting campaign will have been sufficiently successful by 1950 to increase the Army from its present strength of about 129,000 men to about 160,000. But of this total at least a third will be required for training cadres in the British Isles and to form the regular elements in the units stationed in Germany, where the conscripts will complete their training. Thus we reach the conclusion that little more than 100,000 regular soldiers will be available to man the garrisons in Africa, the Far East, and the Middle East. This is somewhat more than the numbers we had before the war, but it is vastly less than the Army we are using at present for these purposes.

In dealing with this question of defence Mr. Bevin stated that he was hoping for a reduction of our commitments owing to the signing of the peace treaties. But the size of these Empire garrisons cannot be affected by the peace treaties with Germany and Japan. However reluctant he may be to admit it, Mr. Bevin must be reckoning on a complete transformation of the Middle Eastern situation during the next two years which will make possible a reduction in the size of the forces there before the National Service Act comes into force in 1950.

What form will this transformation take? There are two possibilities. If Russian-American tension continues, and the Middle East remains a battleground of the two ideologies, then he may be expecting the Americans to take over a large part of our military responsibilities in the area. The only alternative is a Three-Power agreement which will make it possible to cease treating the area as a potential second front in a war against Russia. Whichever happens, the unilateral British military responsibility must be brought to an end before the next two years are out and the National Service Act comes into force.

In answering his critics, Mr. Bevin seemed to suggest that they are demanding the sacrifice of vital interests, and that it is his duty to defend those vital interests tenaciously against all comers. But is a unilateral British responsibility for garrisoning the Middle East a vital interest? Here again the facts are against the Foreign Secretary. No one any longer disputes the strategic platitude that in the case of a war between ourselves and Russia we should not be able to make use of Persian or Arab oil for very long. The Middle East might be developed as a second front, but in the first phase of the war the oilfields would be overrun. It is our peacetime use of the oil which is the vital interest, and the peace-time dollar revenue which it earns. But it must be observed that at present we are spending far more dollars in maintaining troops in Palestine and Egypt than we are receiving for the oil which we sell. The net result of our present Middle Eastern policy is actually to take money from the pockets of the workers, and the short answer to the Foreign Secretary is that, if he talks in the simple terms of the pay packet, the Middle East at present is a liability. Taken together with even greater expenditure in the British Zone of Germany, it accounts for nearly the whole of the gap between exports and imports. Whatever the merits of the counter-proposals in *Keep Left*, Mr. Bevin should honestly tell his constituents that the effect of *his* ambitions in the Middle East upon their pay packets is to reduce them.

No one suggests an immediate evacuation of all British troops from the Middle East, just as no one proposes that we should clear out of the British Zone of Germany. But it is surely common sense to admit that these two commitments must be substantially decreased if we are to avoid national bankruptcy in the next two years. The real issue is how this is to occur. Shall we, as we did in the case of Greece and Turkey, drift on until suddenly and dramatically we have to admit that we are too weak to carry the burden? That is the surest way of lowering our prestige and endangering our vital interests. Or shall we, in good time, state our determination to reduce these two commitments and put forward constructive proposals for filling the vacuum which is bound to be created?

It may, of course, be true that in neither case can an agreement with Russia now be reached. If that is really so, then we have no alternative but to put the facts squarely to the Americans and to tell them as soon as possible that we are unable to continue to pay for imports into Germany or to bear the whole military cost of garrisoning the Middle East against Communist aggression. If we did this, we should probably be employing the most effective method of bringing the Americans into a frame of mind in which they are ready to reach agreement with the Soviet Union. It is only by showing them what the cost of permanent disagreement is that we shall make agreement likely.

The ideal for the Middle East is, of course, that no Great Power should maintain troops in this area, and that all Three should work together in guaranteeing it against aggression, developing its resources and raising its standard of living. This would leave us free to develop the trans-African route, to retain bases in Kenya and the Sudan, and so to work out a commonwealth strategy suited to the atomic age.

But this ideal can only be achieved by a Three-Power agreement which removes the present fear that reduction of British garrisons would be immediately followed by a Russian invasion. Mr. Bevin's critics believe that a Three-Power agreement of this sort should be the aim of British policy, and that the vital British interests in the area can only be guaranteed by such an agreement, of which American financial support for such projects as the Jordan Valley Authority and the Euphrates Valley Authority would form an important part. They believe that if the Americans were faced with the choice between supplying American soldiers for garrisoning the Middle East against Russia, and reaching agreement with her, there is a considerable chance that they would prefer the path of peace.

There remains the problem of Palestine. We have seen that the Government has already by its decision to reduce the period of national service made it impossible to maintain the *status quo*. Yet it is disturbing to read that a British spokesman in New York last week again asserted that Great Britain would not feel herself bound by any Uno decision which was not acceptable both to Jews and to Arabs. It looks as though Mr. Bevin is still stubbornly determined to continue the Mandate. Yet, if this is so, this country will be burdened indefinitely with an intolerable military responsibility. It is to be hoped that on this point at least the delegates at Margate will express themselves clearly. To attempt to retain the Mandate in defiance of the emphatic demands of Jews and Arabs alike, in order to build a British military base at Gaza, is not only bad politics, but bad strategy as well. For two years, Palestine alone has cost us far more than all the profits of the oil of Persia and Iraq. Our indecision and vacillation have lowered our prestige in the Arab world and aroused American public opinion against us. If Mr. Bevin is not prepared at Margate to make a statement on our long-term policy for Palestine, he could at least declare his willingness to reduce the tension in that unfortunate country by an increase in the rate of immigration pending the decision of Uno.

BRITAIN'S IRISH LARDER

To an Englishman lately returned from Ireland it seems strange how little attention seems to be paid in Great Britain to the problem of the economic relations between the two countries. It would appear to be a matter of plain common sense, in the interests of both, to develop the largest possible volume of mutual trade; and, on the face of the matter, it would seem that this could be most easily done if the two Governments would but come together to work out the terms on a purely business footing. Ireland—by which for the present I mean Saorstat Eireann—is and is bound to remain a predominantly agricultural country. It has practically no coal and few raw materials valuable for industry; and though it can develop its hydro-electric resources and may be able in the future to extract valuable by-products from its peat, as well as to use it directly as fuel, its industrial capacity seems likely to remain very limited, even if a wide range of finishing industries producing consumers' goods is given the advantage of high protection at the expense of the Irish consumer.

At any rate, nobody in Ireland supposes that the country can, by any method, so develop its industries as to cease to be mainly agricultural. The real question concerns the form which its agricultural development is to take as things settle down now that the war is over. During the war, Ireland perforce turned over to wheat-growing on a large scale, adopting a system of compulsory tillage for the assurance of its supply of bread. At the same time, the disappearance of imported feeding-stuffs involved a sharp fall in the number of pigs and, to a smaller extent, of poultry; and even milk became short as more was used for making butter and cheese to replace imported margarine and cheese that were no longer available. To some extent, war conditions must continue for some time yet; for Ireland, like Great Britain, must grow cereals on a large scale as long as the world shortage still exists. But there are already considerable possibilities of expanding other kinds of agricultural output without reducing cereal crops; and as cereals become more abundant on the world market the great question will be whether Ireland is still to go on growing most of its own wheat or is to revert to a more diversified agriculture designed mainly to meet the requirements of the British market.

If the British market can be relied on to absorb at a fair price whatever quality foodstuffs Ireland is in a position to produce—above all, pig products, poultry farm products, cattle and sheep (or dead meat), vegetables and fruit—it seems perfectly clear that, on economic grounds, the country can prosper much more by a diversified agriculture than by a continuance of cereal cultivation on a large scale. Most Irish farms are very small by English standards—certainly too small for profitable cereal production except as an element in mixed farming and mainly for conversion on the farm into higher-grade products; and even the larger farmers stand to do better with ley-farming than with concentration on cereals as their main crop.

This diversified agriculture is, however, impracticable as a national policy unless home-produced feeding-stuffs can be supplemented by imported supplies. The potato can form a large element in animal diet for both pigs and poultry; but it will not do by itself. It has to be eked out with maize or other imported feeding-stuffs, as well as by skim milk, which can be produced at home; and wheat offals are needed in winter when skim milk is not to be had. But the quantity of imports needed is small in relation to the food values which can be created with their aid, if they are used to supplement, and not to replace, the potato. Thus, a little foreign exchange spent in buying feeding-stuffs would yield a high return in valuable foodstuffs which the British consumers badly need; but of course some of the little would have to be spent in dollars, whereas the British payment would be made in sterling; and Ireland cannot afford the dollars. Yet it seems clear that we in Great Britain could afford better to supply the relatively few dollars needed to help Ireland to diversify its agriculture than we can to spend more dollars in buying American bacon and other expensive foodstuffs direct from hard-currency areas. Moreover, if we look a little way ahead, it might be practicable not only to resume, but also greatly increase Ireland's pre-war imports of feeding-stuffs from Rumania and Yugoslavia—that is, from "soft" currency areas.

Of course, this is not a complete statement of the position. The Irish, in 1939, had to face the necessity of increasing greatly their cereal output—the more so because of their determination to stay neutral in the war; and there are some Irishmen who hold that, in face of the risk of another world war, they must keep up their cereal production, even at a very high cost, for reasons of national security. This is a different matter from the need to maintain it temporarily, until the world shortage of cereals has been overcome; and it seems a doctrine of despair for the Irish to condemn themselves permanently on this ground to a lower standard of living, especially as it might be cheaper for them, when the world situation allows, to hold sufficient stocks of wheat to give them time to turn over again to high cereal production if the war danger should seem to be imminent. The national security argument would hardly carry as much force as it does were it not reinforced, openly or unconsciously, by a feeling that agricultural self-sufficiency is somehow an ideal to be pursued for its own sake, and—perhaps still more—by a sentiment of hostility to any policy that is bound to increase Irish dependence on the British market, even if it equally increases British dependence on Ireland.

The economico-financial dispute that held Ireland and Great Britain apart in the 1930s complicates the present issue, because it has left unpleasant memories behind. Nevertheless it remains a fact that the Irish farmer cannot hope to make the best of the natural resources at his command unless he caters for the British market in foodstuffs of high nutritive value; and it is no less a fact that the expansion of mutual trade with Ireland could materially ease the British problem of paying for essential imports, by providing an additional sterling source of supplies which are both expensive in dollars and notably short. It would, no doubt, be politically impracticable to give the Irish farmers better opportunities for buying feeding-stuffs from hard currency areas than the British farmers; but there is no reason why the opportunities should not be improved simultaneously for both. What would be essential would be to give the Irish farmer an assurance that, if he adapted his methods to catering more largely for the British consumer, he would not, within a year or two, find this market again closed to him, or seriously restricted by some sort of quantitative control, or by an attempt to buy his surplus at a specially low price because of his difficulty of finding alternative buyers.

In effect, what seems to be needed is a fair and explicit long-term bargain, to be brought into operation gradually as the emergency conditions cease to enforce an uneconomically high level of cereal cultivation on the Irish people. The effects of such an arrangement could be as beneficial politically as economically; for they would help to dissipate suspicions which rest on historical causes long out of real bearing. Recent speeches by Mr. Lemass, the Irish Minister of Economic Affairs, seem to indicate a growing recognition of the case for closer economic relations with Great Britain; and the Majority Report of the Irish Committee of Inquiry on Post-Emergency Agricultural Policy gives strong support to the policy of encouraging a largely diversified agriculture, with stock-breeding, milk production, and the breeding of pigs and poultry as its outstanding lines of development. This Report favours, indeed, the maintenance for some time to come of a guaranteed price for wheat of good quality; but it is against putting this price so high, when the world shortage is over, as to encourage the main body of small farmers to rely on wheat as a staple "cash" crop. Less than 10 per cent of Irish farms of five acres or more exceed 100 acres, and only 2½ per cent exceed 200 acres. The small farmers are still the key factor in the Irish agricultural situation; and for them diversified production, based largely on the conversion of arable crops into meat, milk and poultry, is the only means to an improved standard of living except at the expense of the rest of the population. They can, given the right encouragement (which must include better, and largely Co-operative, marketing methods), produce just the kinds of foodstuffs of which it is vitally important for Great Britain to get more without spending dollars; and Great Britain can offer in return both capital goods and consumers' goods which Ireland badly needs.

Why, then, is no bargain made? Partly because the Irish are fearful of undue dependence and suspicious of British will to offer reasonable terms; but also partly because in Great Britain there are interests strongly hostile to the Irish meat trade and unwilling to adjust their practice to the acceptance of increased supplies from Ireland. Most of all, perhaps, because the economic problem of British-Irish relations is still obfuscated by memories of Irish neutrality in the war and by older memories of British oppression in Ireland. I have not attempted to argue with either of these prejudices: I am simply stating the clear case, on economic grounds, for an attempt to drive a mutually profitable commercial bargain between two neighbour countries which, whatever may have been true in the past, can have nothing of real substance to quarrel about to-day or to-morrow.

G. D. H. Cole

A LONDON DIARY

The Margate Conference will discuss atomic warfare. A courageous Defence Minister would reveal the facts which must have been brought to his attention by the experts. They must terrify him, and their effect on the public opinion might be to force the issues which have now got log-jammed at Lake Success. Britain's defence budget is £900 millions a year, but I am told on the best authority that in any industrialised country an atomic plant could be developed for £300,000,000, and for about £30,000,000 could produce more than 200 bombs a year. These would be sufficient to paralyse any opponent if the blow was struck first. Even more horrifying is the research, far advanced during the war and continued since, into biological warfare. This is no longer confined to poison gas, or to the much-discussed germ-warfare which we expected would let loose deadly epidemics in the last war. New horrors have been introduced; they include sprays which would destroy vegetation and produce in man biological monstrosities. Even Wells never dared imagine the effects of death clouds of radio-active poison. The Margate Conference cannot by a resolution save the world from these grotesque perils, but it can consider in the most realistic terms the proposition that this country should renounce the development of atomic and biological warfare. If an atomic war came, these vulnerable islands would be completely destroyed in the clash between the hemispheres. Our only hope is that by atomic neutrality we should avoid provoking either side to destroy us as an arsenal or as a base.

* * *

Whenever the subject of corporal punishment is raised, hearty public school men come forward to tell us with pride just how many times they were flogged at school, and how satisfactory a form of punishment it was; how they themselves in turn became the floggers and how in both capacities they found the relations of flogger and floggee full of mutual respect and cordiality. Sometimes they even seem to think that they learned from caning a sense of right and wrong, or at least of justice and injustice. On this point I should have said that the real advantage was that they carried from school into an unjust world a useful lesson that it is necessary to bear much injustice without complaint. I agree, of course, that where corporal punishment is as much part of the tradition as it is at the older public schools, there is no element of "humiliation" such as the opponents of corporal punishment often allege. The attitude in less elevated establishments is different. The cane is simply the overtaxed master's way of keeping order in classes which are too large for serious education. If corporal punishment in day schools, where punishment is usually given on the hand, were of comparable severity to that which is administered by prefects and masters in public schools, there would be riots and deputations of indignant parents. It is well to get these facts right, or else the discussion about the efficacy of caning as a method of school discipline gets confused. One other distinction seldom made is, I believe, of great importance. As the agitation against corporal punishment grows, so there is a tendency to reserve it for "serious offences." This makes matters far worse. There is a case for the occasional use of the cane for boys between, shall we say, the ages of 9 and 14, provided that it is used on the spot without malice and for the purpose of making a naughty boy understand that if he is persistently and wilfully late and impertinent, if he throws ink about and generally disturbs the whole class, he is liable to get hurt. But for serious offences corporal punishment is the most useless thing in the world. Caning never made a liar truthful, a dirty-minded boy chaste or a thief honest.

* * *

There is another side to this subject which those of us who come from public schools usually know about but seldom mention. Rousseau was only the first to confess that his first sex stimulation came from being whipped by a governess. The slight embarrassment and sniggering tone that creep into every discussion of this subject are in themselves evidence that it brings with it a whole train of sexual images. Those who placard our cities with pictures of half-naked women carrying whips are experienced advertisers who know what will attract attention. I recall Berlin in the period immediately before the Nazis, when the shops were full of books on flagellation and when prostitutes wearing high boots differentiated themselves from their more feminine rivals. In more decorous England, no pornographic shop is complete without several well-illustrated books on flagellation, which the French call *le vice anglais*. It would be interesting to have the evidence of psychiatrists on this point. The regular psycho-analyst will of course come forward with detailed testimony about the part that whipping plays in sexual maladjustment. People will say, however, that he only knows of a few exceptional cases. I believe that many educationalists, social workers, medical doctors and others whose business it is to help people in their personal problems, could provide a formidable body of evidence of the psychological harm done to our society by the experience of whipping or the observations of it among young children.

* * *

An appetising rumour was delighting the Conservative intelligentsia in my part of Essex last week-end. The story went that the Minister of Food, who lives some ten miles away, had been caught on the land of a well-known Conservative proprietor with a gun in one hand, a dead pheasant in the other. The proprietor, it was said, had decided not to prosecute this distinguished poacher, but compelled him to compound for his misdeed by giving £50 to a local charity. I promptly put my spies to work. They discovered that the story was stale, and that the reporters of one of our great London dailies had spent a week in the area, passionately but fruitlessly seeking for evidence. There was not even the remotest shadow of truth in the yarn. I put the Minister himself through a severe interrogation. My third degree methods elicited the confession that his son Charles possessed an air-gun, and thus armed, father and son sometimes seek, by permission, to shoot rabbits over the land of a neighbouring farmer, who himself shoots over Mr. Strachey's own acre. Could it be that some more dangerous sportsmen who had been warned off the farmer's land, had seen the Stracheys at work and spread the rumour that they too were poachers? "But," Mr. Strachey added, "Charles, who carries the air-gun, has not yet hit a single rabbit."

* * *

Presumably it was the outcry about "mousetrap" that led to the decision to produce Stilton in a hurry. But can anyone produce Stilton in a hurry? Is it not a contradiction in terms? I hope I am wrong, but I have an uneasy suspicion that the flavour of Stilton comes from the corruption of old age which is not to be mistaken for the decadence of youth. Will it be Stilton if, as the announcement says, it is to be on the market by autumn, produced by "quick-ripening" processes, some of which had been developed in America during the war? The report went on to explain that the cheese would be for the home market, as it would not keep sufficiently long for export! Most people who have visited America will remain unimpressed, for, next to its quantity and variety, the most noticeable thing about food served in American cities is its lack of flavour. When the food chemist and engineer-cook walk in, flavour walks out. To a lesser extent than in America, but just as persistently, flavour is disappearing from British food. However, a generation which does not object to painted kippers, or steak pie which does not become pie until a triangle of pastry and corned beef meet for the first time on a plate is presumably fair game for the food processer.

* * *

Even in big cities nature is not easily ousted. Birds, animals and plants all filter through the stone defences. From my window in Holborn I can watch willow-wrens, and outside on a bombed site at the corner of Great Turnstile and Holborn, where wild flowers now grow, a pair of mallards appear to have settled down comfortably despite the noise and lack of privacy. I leave it to experts to discuss the powers of observation needed to spot, from a height, such a tiny surface of water and the navigational instinct which enables a bird to return to it. More surprising to me was to hear that a fox recently made its way, not for the first time, into a Highgate garden. The attraction was chickens. Alas for the fox, the gardener was what McTurk called "a man not fit to live in the same country with a god-fearing fox." He used a gun.

* * *

I am in the position to deny the rumour that the Conservative party, deeply perturbed at the unfair publicity given in every thoroughfare to the pamphlet *Keep Left*, are proposing to demand that Britain should change her rule of the road and follow the United States in inflicting penalties on those who do not keep to the Right.

CRITIC

TWICE-TOLD TALE

(*With apologies to "Ferdinand," by Munro Leaf.*)

Once upon a time in Spain there was a little bull and his name was Franco.
He liked to sit just quietly and smell the flowers.
Sometimes his mother, who was a cow, would worry about him.
"Why don't you skip and butt your head with the other little bulls?" she would say.
But Franco would shake his head. "I like it better here where I can sit just quietly and smell the flowers."
As the years went by Franco grew and grew until he was very big and strong.
All the other bulls, the Falangist bull, and the Republican bull, and the Anarchist bull and the Monarchist bull would fight each other all day.
But not Franco. He still liked to sit just quietly and smell the flowers.
And from all the other countries outside Spain, from England, and America, and France and Italy, they sent Franco flowers.
One day five men came to pick the biggest bull to fight in the bull fights at Madrid.
And they chose Franco. So they took him away for bull fight day in a cart.
And all the other bulls shouted for joy. "Now," they said, "Franco is in the cart."
What a day it was! Flags were flying, bands were playing. They had a parade into the bull ring.
First came the Banderillas with long sharp pins to stick in the bull and make him angry—they were Giral and Negrin.
Next came the Picadors, and they had long sharp spears to stick in the bull and make him angrier—they were Gromyko and Mr. Bevin.
Then came the Matador, the proudest of all—Don Juan.
Then came the bull, and you know who that was, don't you? FRANCO!
Everyone shouted and clapped because they thought he was going to butt and snort and stick his horns around.
But not Franco.
When he got to the middle of the ring he saw a huge mound of wreaths from Dr. Dalton, and Mr. Truman, and Monsieur Bidault and Signor Nitti.
And he just sat down quietly and smelled.
He wouldn't fight no matter what they did. And the Banderillas were angry, and the Picadors were angrier, and the Matador was so angry that he cried because he couldn't show off with his cape and sword.
So they had to take Franco home.
And he is sitting there still, smelling the flowers, just quietly.
He is very happy.

SAGITTARIUS

AS THE MINER SEES IT

On Saturday morning, as I sat in the Kent Regional Coal Board's offices, whose windows look out over a huddle of War Department hangars dating from World War I, when Richborough was a secret port, the Financial Director handed the Chairman a slip of paper showing the field's output for the second five-day week. The figures were good—well above the 1947 target. The gain of 3,000 tons recorded in the first week of the new working hours had been practically maintained, and would have been bettered but for a temporary hold-up in one mine, for which the miners were in no way to blame. Absenteeism from all causes, previously at a high figure, had been halved. The Board was pleased. Would I care to hear details of the steps being taken and projected to improve mechanical facilities underground, or the technical plans of the Production Director for the future development of a field which, before the war, had an output of well over 2 million tons a year, but is to-day—with a similar but proportionately older labour force—producing only 1,500,000 tons? Conscious of my ignorance of the problems which a mining engineer has to overcome, I begged to be excused. Enough has been written about the technical needs and possibilities of the British coal industry. My purpose in visiting the Kent field, whose four pits, (with a mining population drawn from areas as far afield as Scotland, Wales and Durham), form a microcosm of the coal industry, had been to try to see the new regime and particularly the five-day week through the miners' eyes.

What I found everywhere was a real sense of responsibility, a real determination to make nationalisation work, coupled with genuine delight in the first instalment of the Charter. In the sunshine of Saturday morning miners were digging in the little gardens attached to what had been "company" houses. One was sitting in the sun reading *Keep Left*—this is a politically minded coalfield; others were making ready to go into Dover for the afternoon. Though there were grumbles that the "bonus shift" should not be wholly forfeited by men who were certified to be sick on Friday, after four days in the pit, the cutting out of the sixth shift had given the men a feeling that they were at last being given the right to the same chance of rest and social meetings as workers in other industries enjoyed. But dozens asked me if I had got the week's production figures at Richborough. The "target" had put them on their mettle.

What did they think of the Regional Board? The attitude was critical but not hostile. Some appointments of subordinate officials taken over from the old managements had angered them (it would be invidious to mention individuals); but the young Production Director appeared to enjoy universal respect. "He is really out to make it work," they said. The selection of a retired Admiral as Chairman of the Board had puzzled the men; they were suspicious, at any rate at first, of attempts to impose the atmosphere of the quarter-deck into the coalfield. He was not, I objected, at all one's idea of a brassbound Admiral, and had impressed me as being both anxious to learn about coal mining and to appreciate sympathetically the miners' point of view. Yes, indeed; he was a "decent old basket," whose friendliness had surprised them. But was he a convinced Socialist? Was the Board collectively going to be vigorous enough to get the Region the priority in immediate supplies of more tubs and ultimately of the power-loading and other mechanical equipment which was its due? The steel and engineering industries needed a good shake-up, I was told.

"You will find the men are inclined to be impatient," they had said to me at Richborough. Perhaps they were; but not, I think, unreasonably. They were prepared to make full allowance for the fact that the new controllers had taken over pits which the old owners had starved of plant and left with stocks of pit-head stores run down to zero. They regarded such things as the installation next week-end of a power-actuated "joy-loader" in Betteshanger Colliery as a reassuring earnest of the Board's good intentions. But would the Board realise that, if they were to get more production, they must cut out red tape? An incident which had made a bad impression was that at Tillmanstone Colliery, when two bobs'-worth of special emery paper had been wanted for a machine, delay had been caused by the purchase having to go through the Board's central buying system. (I was told, though I think this was a leg-pull, that the Board had wanted to call for tenders for the supply). Above all, would the Board be wise enough to see that sub-managers and deputies must be given greater discretionary powers to settle petty disputes and make small extra payments off-hand if they were needed in the interests of output? The complaint was general that the official conciliation machinery worked as slowly as ever, and that, pending a general revision of wages, there must be greater readiness on the management's part to make this or that payment of a few shillings here or there for extra work done to keep up the production flow.

That wages must be revised and, in the case of men not on piece work or "contract," raised substantially, was the view expressed universally. Nothing had caused more anger in the coalfield than the profession by Tory newspapers, when the question of wage revision was recently mooted, of pained surprise that the miners should not be content with the concession of a five-day week. Face workers, they admitted, might be making up to £9 a week; and so might some "contractors" if they sweated their guts out. But the majority of the men on the Region's 6,000 payroll were on day wages; and here was a typical wage sheet of a day-wage man working underground.

	£	s.	d.
Basic wage for five shifts	3	11	6
Bonus shift		17	8
Kent allowance		3	4
Cost of living allowance		13	4
	£5	5	10

From this gross wage, deductions for insurance, hospital, medical scheme and welfare would amount to 4*s.* 6*d.*; and the cost of five meals, five "snaps," and five cups of tea bought in the pithead canteen would be 9*s.* So, take-home pay, before P.A.Y.E., would be only 92*s.* 4*d.* a week. For Coal Board houses rents range from 12*s.* to 18*s.* a week—less than in the neighbouring towns—and miners' coal counts a bit. (I found, incidentally, a widespread feeling that there could be greater economies here if the Coal Board would provide miners' houses with other facilities for cooking. But when it is remembered that the basic wage of surface workers is 10*s.* a week less than that of day men underground, it is manifest that, except in the case of the minority earning relatively good money on "piece," miners' pay is grossly inadequate in the light of the present rising cost of living, with cigarettes at 3*s.* 4*d.* a packet and the wives finding that every month a pound has to do more and more work in housekeeping and buying children's clothes.

Even if it means that the price of coal to manufacturing industry has to be subsidised—at any rate until mechanisation and the general reorganisation of the coalfields has led to increased output per man-shift—the country has got to face the fact that there has to be a radical scaling-up of day wages. An encouraging feature, however, in the Kent miners' outlook was that there appeared to be a consensus of opinion that wage revision should be on an incentive basis: the day wage—and with the extension of power-loading more and more men at the face would necessarily have to be on day wages—should include a bonus element based on the production either of the whole pit or of a particular "district" in the pit. This, most of the men admitted, would be essential if interest in higher output was to be sustained throughout the mines.

But the cash incentive, vital as it is if adequate recruitment is to be maintained for the toughest of occupations, will not in itself be enough: the miners must be given the sense of having a greater share in management, a greater say in pit development. Much turns on the use which the Coal Board makes of the Pit and Regional Consultative Councils now in process of formation. On the former the miners will be represented by directly elected representatives; on the latter their delegates will be the local N.U.M. officials. Will this form of industrial democracy work, in the sense of positively stimulating output? There is an obvious danger that neither trade union officials nor directly elected representatives, chosen (it may be) because they are well-liked men, may possess the Stakhanovite touch; but if mine managers and Regional Boards take these Councils seriously and discuss with them, not merely questions of safety and welfare, but every managerial plan for mechanisation and development, then they will get, I believe, from the miners a sustained interest in output. The Kent miner demands, and demands rightly, a levelling up of wages; and he expects the country to see that the mines in which he risks his health and life have absolute priority in their call on the steel and engineering industries for new, modern equipment. But he recognises, as he never did before, that he is called upon to make good a great Socialist experiment. And that he is determined to do. As I left Deal in the gathering dusk, the parting words to me from a group in their Saturday clothes were: "Tell your paper that if the Coal Board does not make a great thing of *our* mines, we will up and break them in pieces in our hands." To that spirit my salutations.

Aylmer Vallance

PRISON

Any one who has visited many scores of prisons in divers countries and climates knows in his heart that there is nothing devised by the wit of man that can be quite so illusory as a well-ordered prison. The diligent visitor can peer and pry into every nook and cranny, and ask and try and test everything produced for his inspection, and at the end he is little nearer knowing whether the prison is accomplishing its destined purpose, or indeed any purpose at all.

The primaries of prison administration are few in number, and whether or not they are observed in any prison can usually be determined by an intelligent visitor within an hour of his arrival. Whatever effect a prison system hopes to produce upon the prisoner by its system of treatment and training, it is painfully true that it cannot effect anything in the absence of the prisoner. The first essential therefore is that prisoners should be kept in the prison for the period of their sentence. But security in its turn rests on discipline. It is unlikely that hundreds of human beings will for long periods in their life acquiesce meekly in the complete surrender of their liberty and will make no sort of effort to regain it. There must therefore be a body of men vigilant and active through the day and night to ensure good order and to prevent escape. There must be some understanding and common agreement between the prisoners and those in charge of them, and this is commonly called a spirit or a state or a system of discipline.

The visitor who is anxious to satisfy himself as to the security of a prison will therefore first take such steps as he can to assay the discipline of staff and prisoners alike. So far as that of the staff is concerned, he will do well, in passing through the gate, to head straight for the office of the Governor or Superintendent, and throw wide open the largest window that looks out upon the prison yard. He will hear a number of prison officers giving orders to the prisoners. If he hears these orders given in a quiet crisp voice, which seems to carry with it the assumption that each order will be obeyed without question or delay, he will close the window, feeling that, for the moment at any rate, all is well. But if he hears an order given and a few seconds later the same order repeated in a louder and more irascible tone, he will know that all is not well, and that some, at any rate, of the staff have not yet learned the very first lesson a prison officer should learn at his Training School, *i.e.*, how to give an order to a prisoner.

Later he will pass through the prison yard, and his practised ear will detect the difference between the growl and mutter of discontented men, and the normal chatter of equable and unstrained prisoners. He cannot fail to gain a mass impression of normality or strain.

It may well be that the regime of the prison will respond very favourably to these rather superficial tests. The officers are smart in bearing, punctilious in salute. The prisoners are modest, but not servile. Their reply to simple questions, "Yes, Sir," "Thank you, Sir," is not reminiscent of that nightmare of the Victorian Poor Law, the pauper who was "very grateful to the kind gentlemen" (i.e. the Guardians of the Poor), for all they have done for him. There are no signs that the prisoners are ill-used or browbeaten. Many months have passed since any prisoner has assaulted an officer, or complained that an officer has laid violent hands upon him. There have been no escapes, or attempts to escape. The lares and penates of discipline and security have been well served. These two great primaries of prison administration have survived the test.

The third primary is the physical well-being of the prisoner. The emphasis on this particular aspect of prison administration is due to the political significance attaching to any sickness or accident accruing to a prisoner. Let a Lancashire miner die from a fall of coal in a disused shaft or die of tuberculosis, and two lines in a local paper will suffice. But let a convict at Dartmoor lose a finger in a workshop lathe, or contract bronchitis in an ill-judged attempt to escape in a November fog, and the hounds of Fleet Street are in full cry. Of this the prison service does not complain. This is as it should be in a community that prides itself on being Christian and civilised. Public opinion demands that when a man has been deprived of his liberty for a long period, and is the defenceless object of a strict State regime, he shall receive an even higher degree of what our American friends call "hospitalisation" than an ordinary citizen, who still has his rights as a free subject.

Public opinion has great faith in the law; it is, perhaps, a pity that it has not always the same faith in the myrmidons. The physical welfare of the prisoner is affected in the first place by the way in which he is treated when he is sick. As a rule the visitor to a big well-run prison is very favourably impressed by the way in which a prisoner is fed and clothed, bedded and exercised during his normal periods of health and activity. He is even more favourably impressed by the care taken of him when he falls sick, by the medical skill and attention that secures his recovery and guards his convalescence.

In all these primary considerations of security, discipline and physical well-being, the prison scores full marks. The visitor can write his flattering report, saying nice things about all concerned, and we need doubt neither his sincerity nor his veracity.

What are sometimes regarded as prison problems of secondary importance may, if they are belittled or disregarded, have such disastrous consequences as to reveal the fact that they should have been accepted as primary questions. If, for instance, the clerical work of a prison is lax, so that records of prisoners or of officers are carelessly kept, if the prison accounts are confused or improperly audited, if letters are not answered punctually and accurately, the whole prison system suffers in efficiency.

All these are axiomatic qualities in any establishment that dares to claim treatment or training as among its objectives.

The visitor to the modern prison will probably discover that both the primaries and the secondaries are equally well observed in the administration. The place runs smoothly and is a well-oiled and a well-ordered mechanism of co-operation and loyalty. In a small world of innumerable details, there appears to be industry, precision and dispatch. There is no dust on the gatekeeper's boots, nor on the kitchen scales, nor on the stock medicines in the hospital. The popular sayings on all hands are "All correct" and "No complaints."

What is the wretched visitor to say? Can it really be true that this is the model prison, and he has discovered it? Or is it all just wool and dust that has blinded his eyes, so that he has been shown everything and seen nothing?

Perhaps he will be wise to accept the fact that a well-run prison is the great illusion, the most plausible façade that bureaucracy ever invented and that what he was really looking for was not to be found among the primaries and secondaries of prison administration. It was a *Tertium Quid*, a mysterious quantity which he could not discover because he could not see it, and did not quite know where to look for it, and if he had found it would not know how to test the truth of his finding. He might at the end of his visit address the Governor and his staff assembled on parade in some such terms as these:—

"Gentlemen, I do thank you for showing me everything, for answering all my questions so fully and so fearlessly.

"I do congratulate you on the order, and discipline of your prison, on its efficiency, cleanliness and industry. It would seem to me that, while complying with all the Statutory Rules laid down by Parliament, and with the thousand and more Standing Orders of your Commissioners you have also done everything within your power to help the prisoners in your charge. I am left with only one question at the back of my mind.

"All through the day and night, you and your colleagues and the prisoners are all doing the right and appointed thing. You are all going through the proper and appropriate movements. No one is late, or dirty or idle. There is no friction, no dispute or sign or threat of force or violence. You have fully satisfied all the primaries and secondaries of prison administration. Yet I feel there is a *Tertium Quid*, a third something, which may perhaps be more important even than the discipline and security and all else we hold so sacrosanct.

"Behind all these correct and proper movements, what is really happening? There must be a *Tertium Quid*, an unseen force or spirit or influence which is moulding the minds and manners and habits of the prisoners here.

"There is the cleaner at the gate, who will be with you for another twelve months. He probably knows as much about this prison as any man. What is he thinking about in his cell to-night? Is he so inured to the daily routine of this peace, that he will feel no reluctance to return for another year? We see him twenty times a day as we go in and out. We do our duty by him, we draw our pay. What is happening to that man, in his mind, and in his heart? We are much the same last week, this week, next week. Is he getting slowly and steadily the better or the worse for his experience?

"There is a boy of seventeen among your young prisoners, who has been here for six months. If he were your son you would be growing anxious about his future, weighing the relative advantages of apprenticeship or scholarship. You have arranged physical training and evening classes in astronomy and algebra for him. You take him to chapel every Sunday, and lead his prison visitor to his cell. What is happening to that boy in this vital formative year of his growth? It is a long way from seventeen to eighteen and what happens in that twelvemonth may load the dice for the rest of his life. What is happening to him while he plods through the excellent weekly programmes you have laid down for him? He may be earning all his marks, but is he nearer to being a man? That is the question I would ask. That is the *Tertium Quid* in a prison. Perhaps if we did discover the *Tertium Quid* in a prison and found out what was really happening to the individual prisoner, we should be far from satisfied. We must at any rate remain far from satisfied until we know the answer to the question 'What is really happening while we go through the proper movements?' The greatest condemnation of a prison system is that after an ordinary judge has sent a man to prison for a twelvemonth, hoping that he might thereby benefit in character and conduct, another Judge should say 'I had hoped for a miracle, but you have provided a most excellent machine.'"

ALEXANDER PATERSON

"THESE CENTURY-OLD CONFLICTS"

ON the road to Haifa, I began to forget the barbed wire of the Jerusalem compounds and the slow armoured car, with the hoarse voice monotonously calling "*Otzer*—Curfew," that had dragged the city from its sleep the previous day. The hanged terrorists had been whisked to their graves in Safed, and the "latter rains" had burst like tears over the desolate streets. But, in the coastal plain, beyond the curfew zone, children shouted and laughed, Jews and Arabs worked among their crops, the white watch-towers of the settlements glittered on the green slopes, and overloaded lorries and buses trundled past banks of wild anemone, hazy wistaria, and the deep mauve of trailing bougainvillea.

In Haifa, despite the pathetic hulks of the illegal immigrant ships, neatly stacked like paupers' coffins against the breakwater, the Jews were less heavy-hearted than in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is a city of politicians, civil servants, shop-keepers and priests. Haifa is a city of workers. When the curfew ends in Haifa, the Jewish stevedores go back to the docks, the glass-workers go down to the Phoenician factory of Solel Boneh, and the Jewish foundrymen to the Vulcan forges. In Jerusalem, there is time to brood. In Haifa, the Jews think less of politics than that imprisonment by curfew prevents them from getting on with their work.

David Hacohen, director of Solel Boneh, the contracting department of the Jewish Federation of Labour, met me in Hadar Hacarmel. In America, Hacohen, who has the mind and capacity of a great industrialist, would, no doubt, have made a great fortune. In Palestine he has, instead, made Solel Boneh—not for personal gain, but for the sake of his Trade Union—into the greatest contracting corporation of the Middle East. He, himself, receives the same low salary as any other manager of Solel Boneh. During the war he simultaneously executed large-scale works for the British Army, and acted as a leading agent of British Intelligence in the Middle East. On June 29th, Hacohen, with other Jewish Trade Unionists, was arrested and interned at Latrun—perhaps because he was once a student at the London School of Economics.

In mind, as in stature, Hacohen is a dominant figure, undeflected by disappointment from the tasks he has set himself. He believes in Arab-Jewish co-operation, and took me to a committee meeting of the Haifa municipality to show how it works. The Jewish Mayor, Shabatai Levi, presided. On his left sat Watson, the British City Engineer, a well-loved Haifa character, who has devotedly served both Arabs and Jews. The Christian Arab Vice-Mayor sat on his right. Nearby was the Moslem Vice-Mayor, Karaman, an Arab industrialist. The Jewish clerk sat in front of the Mayor, and the Jews and Arabs of the Committee sat around. The subject was the building of new houses for ex-Servicemen in a Haifa suburb. The Haifa municipality does not concern itself with Jews or Arabs; it deals with the affairs of Haifa's citizens.

Outstanding among those who have worked to unite Jews and Arabs is Aba Hushi, the Jewish Secretary of the Haifa Labour Council. The day before the mass arrests of June 29th, he was warned by a British friend not to return home. In the following days, five Arab emissaries came from their villages to offer him refuge and shelter. One Sheikh sent his own son to stay at Aba Hushi's house as a hostage for his safety. Aba Hushi's wife sent the child back to his village with gratitude; her husband was already in hiding. The Arabs like Aba Hushi, because Aba Hushi likes Arabs. When he came to Palestine over twenty years ago, he learnt Arabic, went into the dock areas and, after many disappointments, taught Jews and Arabs to work side by side for better conditions. In 1929, Jews were murdered by Arabs in the Haifa dock area; in 1938, despite outside disturbances, the docks were quiet. But on the desk in Aba Hushi's office is a ship's bell engraved with the word *Patria*. Aba Hushi, who wants Jews and Arabs to live in peace, does not forget the ship that sank outside Haifa with hundreds of refugee immigrants on board.

He told me that an invitation had come from the Sheikh of a village about forty miles away, asking me to be the guest at a traditional feast. Aba Hushi, two members of the Arab Labour League, "Reggie" Rosenberg—a South African ex-fighter pilot now in the Jewish Agency—Aba Hushi's son and myself set off in two cars. (Aba Hushi is dark, almost like an Arab; his son, like large numbers of Palestinian Jews, is tall and blond. This physical evolution is, strangely enough, regarded rather as a fault by unfriendly commentators, who speak nostalgically of the gentle, black-haired Jew with soft brown eyes.)

Two hours out of Haifa, we stopped the cars at a stony path leading to the village. The Immam, an ancient with a flowing white beard, greeted us himself.

"This is a great honour" said Aba Hushi.

Together we climbed the road, where the flies clotted the well-trodden faeces, to the house of the Sheikh's son, a new stone building with a cool, clean interior. The notables of the village bowed in greeting. Aba Hushi handed the son a friendly basketful of gifts. Our hosts then sat facing us in comely silence, while I, with a proper nonchalance, leant on an embroidered bolster. Aba Hushi was the interpreter.

"You are welcome," said the Sheikh's son. "This is a happy day for us."

"It is a joy for us to accept your hospitality." I answered.

"Friendship and hospitality is the law of our religion," said the Sheikh. Our host disappeared. "From now on," said Aba Hushi, "he won't rest or sit down until we have eaten and gone."

The Sheikh's son brought us rose water and coffee, and handed the other guests a table napkin which was passed from mouth to mouth.

"This is the first time that this room has been used," said the Sheikh's son. "We kept it for such an occasion. Those who have consecrated it to-day will always be our friends."

"Nothing will disturb our friendship," said Aba Hushi.

They required no proof from him. He had sent a Jewish doctor to stamp out trachoma in the village; he had once given a transfusion of his own blood to a wounded Arab terrorist.

"We are simple people" said the Mukhtar. "We worry about simple things—about our flocks, about our olives, about our water. Let the big ones bother with politics. Our politics are that everyone should live together in peace. The world is great; there is room for all."

"Where does the village water come from?" I asked.

"We have to walk one hour to draw water," said the Mukhtar. "We have asked the administration for water for twenty years, but nothing ever happens."

"I will speak to the administration about the water," I said.

Before the feast began, we climbed to a pinnacle of the mountain, and looked down on the unpopulated valley.

"There is room for many people," said the Mukhtar. I looked at him. Was this an extreme of hospitality? He looked gravely towards the lake. As we returned to the house, the villagers came to their doors and invited us in.

In accordance with the oriental custom of not merely entertaining guests but of waiting on them as well, my host stood behind me, encouraging me to eat of the roast sheep, the chickens, the rice, the salads, the cream and the hard-boiled eggs. I ate two hard-boiled eggs; he put another two in front of me.

"Our guests love us," he said, "in proportion to how much they eat."

By that standard, my driver—an ex-member of the Jewish Brigade—and the secretary of the Arab Labour League loved our hosts most. They showed their affection unceasingly.

"On rare occasions," said the Immam, "the sun stops so that we may savour our happiness longer. Such a day is this."

But the sun, having paused, began to move towards the west, and I wanted to get back to Jerusalem before the dusk road-curfew began. Our hosts loaded us with fruit—some of it packed and wrapped in the U.S.A. At our parting the Sheikh's son gave me a skilfully woven, brightly coloured basket which his wife had made. He asked in return for my visiting card.

As we drove off, the Mukhtar shouted after us.

"What is he saying?" I asked Aba Hushi.

"He said, 'Don't forget the water!'."

MAURICE EDELMAN

HOPKINS

GOWLAND HOPKINS had sublimely simple faith in the ultimate good of Science. When he died last week-end, Science had already recognised his transcendent merit by its highest honours—the Nobel Prize, the Presidency of the Royal Society and of the British Association and medals and distinctions unstinted. He had been knighted and given the Order of Merit but, because he was modest and inconspicuous in his well-doing and never a man of affairs, the man-in-the-street barely knew him.

He was the father of the Science of Nutrition. His discovery of vitamins in 1912 laid its sure foundations. Hunger before his time might be a moral challenge to society: it might lead to Poor Relief and the soup-kitchen; provide work for the Salvation Army or stir the compassion of the kindly rich towards the ungrateful and improvident poor. But on the initiative of Hopkins it became a remorseless challenge to statesmen and, alongside the atom-bomb, a main preoccupation of our time.

With the encouragement of Hopkins, John Boyd Orr, as a nutrition scientist, took the criteria of the laboratory and applied them to human needs. Hunger and malnutrition could be measured not by "God's will" in the shape of famine corpses and of the swollen bellies of the famine children, but in terms, accurately assessable, of lack of well-being and of positive economic loss; in terms which hard-faced business men could understand and which politicians could ignore only at their peril. It was possible to produce a health budget, relating income to food and food to health and health to national income. In 1934, Orr announced, at the British Association, his figures on Food, Health and Income. In 1935, no candidate could face an audience in the General Election if he could not answer the challenge of Nutrition.

Hopkins was a member of the technical committee of the Mixed Commission of the League of Nations which was set up to "marry" Health to Agriculture, to relate the basic human need to the basic human industry. Because scientific facts on nutrition had become the common idiom of politics, the popular "climate" already existed before the outbreak of war which made the adoption of an effective rationing system possible in this country. It was a system based on the science which Hopkins had pioneered—a system which by qualitative and quantitative measurement made equitable distribution possible and brought this nation out of a six-years' war healthier than we went into it.

The Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations was born at the Hot Springs Conference of 1942; at last it seemed that the scientific facts of nutrition and of agricultural science were to dictate world politics and give factual reality to "Freedom from Want." Thus was set in motion another kind of scientific "chain-reaction" developing from Hopkins' laboratory work of 1912. A world organisation was created dedicated to the well-being of the 2,500,000,000 people of the world—a full confirmation, we may still hope, of the faith of Sir Gowland Hopkins, whose kindly humanity was outraged by that other chain-reaction which devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The Science of Nutrition has given the ordinary man a consciousness of his needs which is something more than the pangs of hunger or the creeping debility of malnutrition; it has made him demand decent food as a right and not as a concession; it has made him conscious of the needs of "chaps like me," so that a child dying of hunger in the gutter of Calcutta is as real a reproach as a child languishing on his own doorstep. Millions do not have to die before the world realises what a food shortage means. The dwindling calories on the Ruhr mean something even to the average newspaper reader who does not know the clinical manifestations of oedema, osteomalacia and hunger-death. He knows now that hunger can be measured in advance, and even your ex-enemies cannot be allowed to become a reproach to a civilisation which has been forewarned. If I were to write the epitaph of Sir Gowland Hopkins it would be "He made man his brother's keeper."

RITCHIE CALDER

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to S. Nyman.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

I have in my possession a tin of bully beef issued during the 1914–18 war. I keep it on the mantelshelf and it appears to be as fresh as ever.—Letter in *Sunday Pictorial.*

I was horrified to hear a young woman, a product of our primary schools, where I presume history and geography are taught, ask, "Where is Poona?" Can nothing be done to teach young people about the historic greatness of the Empire and of important places in it?—Letter in *Daily Telegraph.*

Two men got a long ladder and placed it against the window. A woman of 14 stone was the first to start the descent. And she set off down the ladder head first. She was prevailed upon to return and go down in the normal way.—Report in *Daily Mirror.*

A Glasgow clothing firm has reduced its consumption of gas to such an extent that yesterday a man who called from the municipal gas department said the meter would have to be taken away. Surprised at the low reading of the meter, he was told the firm had been economising in response to the Ministry of Fuel appeal. "That is overdoing it," he remarked.—Report in *Daily Telegraph.*

And now a wave of resentment is sweeping the countryside because there will be only a six-roomed cottage on the estate available for Lord and Lady Ducie, owners of Tortworth Court, when they return to their country seat this month.—*Sunday Express.*

The Arts and Entertainment

A BUSY WEEK

Rigoletto.—Mr. Pomeroy, whom I have constantly badgered to engage a proper producer, has at last taken the plunge, and to some effect: the masterly hand of Carl Ebert is visible in every scene of this excellent revival, removing hallowed absurdities, creating plausibility and using every device of grouping and gesture to reinforce the intensity of the music. Joseph Carl's decor is an improvement on his *Pasquale*, and Signor Erede gets uncommonly brilliant results out of chorus and orchestra; the whole company has evidently received an electric shock from the presence of a first-rate man of the theatre. But the very best of producers cannot transform bad singers into good, and it is therefore fortunate that the cast contains splendid material. I am particularly glad to have witnessed the London triumph of the Yugoslav baritone, Marko Rothmüller, in the title role. Eleven years ago, after hearing at Zurich his masterly Simone Boccanegra (in that great Verdian opera which has never yet been given in England) I remember describing his voice as "a superb Italianate baritone perfectly placed and used with an artistry far ahead of most contemporary Italians," and that verdict needs no qualification to-day; it is a long time since we have heard in London a singer who combines such absolute steadiness and purity of line with so considerable a degree of histrionic power. Signor Salvarezza sang the Duke's music in a fine, ringing tenor which was likewise blissfully free from wobble; if he could only cultivate a lighter and more seductive style, he would be quite first-class. As Gilda, Daria Bayan looked well and sang with taste, achieving a particularly beautiful soft B flat in the final scene but neither in tone nor in technique did she prove equal to her male colleagues; a "Caro Nome" transposed down and shorn of its last, long, pearly trill cannot honestly be pronounced adequate. Bruce Boyce as Monterone and Martin Lawrence as Sparafucile were highly successful; the Maddalena less so. No shortcomings, however, can obscure the fact that this revival restores to its proper status as a work of fiery genius an opera which is generally treated as a shabby old bore with a few unquenchable tunes.

Beethoven.—Signor de Sabata concluded his highly successful Beethoven cycle with a deliciously crisp performance of the Eighth Symphony and one of the Ninth which began worse and ended better than any other I remember. Excessive *rubato*, in particular a tendency to begin every *ritardando* a bar or two before it was marked, robbed the first movement of its rhythmic tension, and in consequence of its elemental grandeur, and the second was spoilt by erratic tempi; but the slow movement flowed angelically, and the choral finale (laudably given with the original German text) was electrifying, in spite of uneven soloists, thanks to the splendid vigour and certainty of the newly re-formed London Philharmonic Choir.

Berlioz and Fauré.—A sudden spate of Berlioz, provided by the indefatigable Sir Thomas, included a welcome rehearing of the *Requiem*, which contains some of his best music and was notable for a ravishing performance of the tenor solo in the Sanctus by René Soames. The *Symphonie Funèbre et Triomphale* sounded as overpoweringly trashy as ever; and much of the *Te Deum* might have seemed duller but for the startling brilliance and tremendous power of the Sheffield Philharmonic Choir. Fauré's *Requiem* was also well sung, but in a style which somewhow let too much Protestant daylight and Yorkshire energy into the Catholic quietism of this most divine work, which is worth all Berlioz's choral music put together.

Contemporary Music.—Nothing, I am bound to say, in the last L.C.M.C. concert seemed to me to possess much value. The Sauguet cantata was facile and trivial, the Lutyens plain glum, the Nigg *Variations* an exercise in atonalism. As for the much-discussed Messiaen *Liturgies*, they proved to consist of a *sucré* sort of lyricism, deliquescent, enormously repetitive, and overlaid with all the tintinnabulations of the East.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

CLEANLINESS AND TASTE

WHEN the present Director of the National Gallery was at Leeds, he arranged exhibitions of living English artists. Grateful as all painters must feel to a museum official who takes so active an interest in the art of the present, the Royal Academicians have not allowed their friendly feelings to deflect them from the stern path of duty. Indeed the language they have used about the cleaning of a Velazquez in the National Gallery is extravagant, not to say libellous, in its violence. "The world," says Sir Alfred Munnings, "has lost for ever a superb masterpiece of painting." The Velazquez, adds Sir Oswald Birley, "is no longer worth showing on the walls of the National Gallery"; and he supports his views by comparing it with the Velazquezes in Madrid which "have scarcely altered at all in that clean, rare atmosphere." Can he really be unaware that varnish, in any atmosphere however clean, invariably becomes discoloured? These gentlemen take it upon themselves to speak in the name of all artists. What with one thing and another, they never cease to surprise me.

The most bizarre feature of these outbursts is that none of the writers seems to have noticed that the picture was appallingly dirty. What Sir Alfred calls its "mystery" could quickly be regained by shrouding it in a coat of dark varnish, which would make the ornaments on the dress invisible (as they were before the cleaning), and which would reduce the variety of the flesh-painting to the brown of old shoes. I am not so pontifical as to assert categorically that the picture now looks its best, for this is chiefly a matter of taste. It is possible that Velazquez finished the picture with an all-over coat of varnish that had some warmth of colour. If so, this will have been removed by earlier, less careful cleanings. Some old pictures have indeed been so much damaged in the past that it may be thought wise to leave their scars hidden in merciful dirt. I am sure, however, that the Velazquez is not one of these: I think that now it looks magnificent, and that it may look even better in a few years. It is, I repeat, a matter of taste; and personally, while I share Constable's distaste for verdure the colour of an old fiddle, I think that more often than not a very faint discoloration in the varnish gives it an agreeably "settled" appearance. At the same time, this may be due only to my being so used to looking at masterpieces through a veil that would have horrified their creators.

There are no new shows of outstanding interest. The St. George's Gallery has a lively show of young English painters, two of the most gifted being William Scott and John Craxton. (The latter has been in Greece, where he evidently found the feet of the natives as large as those of his English models.) Miss Nora McGuinness's *gouaches* at the Leicester Galleries are much better than they look, *en masse*, for a certain monotony results from the colour-scheme she imposes on nature. Hung separately they would seem far more luminous. The Gimpel Gallery has watercolours by another Irish painter, Louis le Brocquy. He assembles more forms and colours than he can yet control, but his simpler designs reveal great gifts.

I cannot end without a word of homage to the memory of Frances Hodgkins. Her death deprives us of one of the most original and accomplished colourists that the British School has ever produced

ROGER MARVELL

RADIO NOTES

AFTER listening to the three-cornered discussion which implemented, followed up, supported, buttressed, revetted, embastioned. or forfended the second of Mr. Graham Hutton's bellicose expositions of *Britain's Crisis*, I felt thankful that conscience (and perhaps experience) had prevented me from judging the programme on the first few boring minutes. Like most broadcast discussions, impromptu or scripted, this one was like a lamp—increasing in brilliance towards the centre but thin at the periphery. It seemed as if the sense of unreality, created by the studio, the mike, the occasion, and so forth, had had to be gradually broken through—as if the eagerness to appear men of Good Will, assenting with alacrity to the suggestions of a vague optimism, were the necessary prelude to something more serious, because nearer the bone. Unless one recalls that even in Plato's Dialogues the characters begin by attending to politeness, one may be inclined to resent the time apparently wasted at the outset of broadcast symposiums. The consciousness of a *lay* audience

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may have had something to do with this "scripted away" impression. Let us admit that it is wiser not to start these things *in medias res*—that the boxers' handshake is not an empty form—and possess ourselves in patience. In this case the broadcast, once it got going, was of quite peculiar excellence. Sir George Schuster was an admirable chairman, tactful and unpatronising; Mr. Wilfred Brown and Mr. R. G. Lathey spoke with the lucidity and conviction that are born of experience and thought; and their voices were well contrasted. What is more, they became so much interested in what they were saying that they forgot us altogether. Enthralled, we overheard some very intelligent "shop."

The adaptation of Jean-Paul Sartre's *The Flies* was never less than interesting and at times successful; the unevenness of the broadcast as a whole lay partly in the limitations of the medium and partly in the acting, which, although usually on the right lines, suffered the queerest lapses. The play does not, in my view, compare favourably with Hofmannsthal's *Elektra*, since M. Sartre had an axe to grind and does not command either the tremendous compression or the poetic intensity of the Austrian dramatist. His version of the legend is much nearer to Eugene O'Neill's—particularly in his conception of Orestes. In any case *The Flies* can scarcely be appreciated without reference to the circumstances which suggested it: the Paris of the German occupation. This alone gives meaning to Sartre's Aegistheus and his most un-Greek view of Zeus. Where the radio version succeeded best was in the passages of close, sardonic reasoning, and in the expository sequences at the beginning; where it failed—apart from the "Revivalist" crowd scene, which could hardly have been other than acutely embarrassing on the air—was in the emotional outbursts, which were simply over-acted (at the recognition of Orestes by Electra how one longed for Strauss's magnificent page!). Miss Peggy Bryan suggested well the outraged high spirit of Electra, but not (I think) her majesty or her terrifying hatred. Mr. Cyril Cusack—always so sympathetic an actor—seemed a little off the mark in the part of a hero fundamentally weak and estranged from himself; and as Aegistheus Mr. Laidman Browne was monotonously emphatic, to the point of ruining the crucial scene with Zeus which brings to light the theme of the play—the cloaked struggle between Free Will and Authority. On the other hand, the Clytemnestra of Miss Vivienne Chatterton was well considered and highly impressive: in its callous self-pity and its corrupt grandeur this performance brought back memories of Anna Bahr-Mildenburg's famous assumption of the role in Strauss's opera.

Though not an addict of crossword puzzles, I have derived a lot of entertainment from Variety's clever new device on Friday evenings. The musical clues, however, mostly defeated me. As this feature has obviously come to stay, would it not be a good idea to dilute the seriousness of the Third with an occasional crossword presented on the same lines but employing "highbrow" musical clues?

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"Duel in the Sun," at the Carlton

"Walloping," I think, is the word for this much-placarded *Duel in the Sun*. How it wallops! Before even the screen is unveiled and the lights go down, a voice has haled us back to Texas in pioneering days, "when the value of a man's life was held no higher than a woman's virtue." Nice equation: without it the music wouldn't roar so, the sun wouldn't set in bonfires of strontium, the moonlight would lose a magic as of overripe Danish Blue. In Technicolor Texas, of course, two sex-starved brothers are awaiting the arrival of a virgin.

Last week they waited—two lustful crofters—in the Isle of Skye for Miss Patricia Roc. *Their* welcome, you may remember, included rape, flagellation, murder, and the bagpipes; and if one put that down to climate—nowhere else in the world should we expect to find ourselves wrestling in waterfalls or being ceremonially pecked to death by sea-gulls—what is to be expected when mist and sea are exchanged for cactus, sand, and sun? But unlike Miss Roc, Miss Jennifer Jones meets trouble with open arms, or at any rate with very loosely buttoned blouse.

Such trouble! In Texas, where saloons are as vast as Olympia and horses whizz by quicker than Golden Arrows, Miss Jones is very soon sobbing her heart out to the tune of "I'm trash, trash, trash!" while one of the brothers has been far too oncoming and the other far too discreet. So the devil in the lady enjoys a run with Mr. Gregory Peck, murderer and train-wrecker, while the angel devoted to the comparatively educated Mr. Cotten can only get a look in, at the end, by saving his life. Miss Jones is a most appealing and versatile actress: I seem to remember her debut as a peasant girl seeing visions. Here, on the physical level, she has not only to suffer the ordeal of brothers—which she does, I may say, with tumultuous energy—but to pass through that rainbow of tints that transmogrifies the flesh from raw beefsteak to *café crème* and back at the camera's whim. Sometimes Miss Jones seems to be a mulatto, sometimes a gypsy, sometimes she even looks herself. Climate again. She is, in fact, supposed to be half-breed Indian. The film begins lightly with her father being hanged for murder, and ends—*bien saignant*—with dead lovers, when she has shot the bad brother and he has shot her, and they lie bleeding on a sunburnt desert in one another's arms. For tuppence-coloured sadism this puts the Isle of Skye, if I may say so, in the shady latitudes where it belongs.

Not one really convincing moment has gone to the making of this big, battering film. It hurls at the eye and ear with violence—violence of movement, of colour, of story. As sexual melodrama, with a spectacular background, it is in its way remarkable. Four directors, led by King Vidor, and more stars than there are in the firmament combine to get the utmost out of sensation. Some notable sequences (particularly the dark-toned shooting in the bar, and the quick-cut final journey out into the sun) have resulted. But how wearisome, and tame in its conventional savagery, the whole thing is! Wild stallions wouldn't drag me to see it again.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

BALLET

Ballet Rambert at Sadler's Wells

A nicely balanced programme, which included an exceptionally good performance of Tudor's *Dark Elegies*—the only successful attempt at a tragic ballet by a native choreographer—opened the Ballet Rambert's last London season before their Australian visit. The occasion was distinguished by the *premiere* of *Plaisance*, Walter Gore's new ballet to Rossini music and with decor by Harry Cordwell. However unintentionally or unconsciously, *Plaisance* is derived from that most memorable of *ballets d'atmosphère*, *Cotillon* (1932). Four maidens and four cavaliers, in a scene suggestive of carnival occasions, are involved in a series of dancing and (almost) amorous, exchanges. The whole affair is on the verge of the fantastical, yet in this pink, white and crimson setting nothing but dancing actually happens . . . but such dancing! Figures of nice ingenuity have been invented by Mr. Gore and it is hard to decide whether the female or the male members of his cast have provoked the greater invention.

The male and female *pas-de-trois* and the ensembles of six and eight figures were all beautifully danced, and the extensive *pas-de-deux* for Annette Chappell and Walter Gore had moments of wonder.

Plaisance will be a popular success, because it consists entirely of dancing, because it is easy to look at, and because it is particularly easy to admire when performed by the Mlles Chappell, Grimes, Hinton and Wright and the MM. Ellis, Gilpin, Gore and Kalichevsky.

A. V. COTON

Honourable Member

THERE ARE many more Houses of Commons than the one in Westminster—and many more political views expressed than are recorded in Hansard. No election addresses are needed for everyone there is an honourable member the moment he "enters the house". Need you ask where? In the pub! There above all places we find good talkers, good listeners, and good tempers; many opinions given, but no offence taken!

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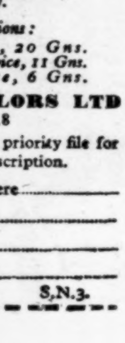

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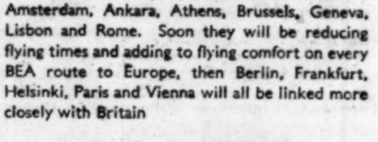

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Correspondence

FAMINE IN YUGOSLAVIA

SIR,—About three million people in Western Yugoslavia are at present facing starvation or semi-starvation owing to serious shortage of grain. Those of us who have been working with the Unrra Yugoslav Mission have seen the amazing efforts made by the peasants to restore and exceed the pre-war area of cultivated land. We have also seen the results of their labour frustrated by two successive droughts.

Unrra's aid has averted famine so far, and has enabled the people to restore order to the threadbare economy of their land. That the maximum use has been made of this aid is due entirely to excellent organisation on the part of the government and local councils, and the untiring devoted work of the people. One obtains a glimpse of their fine spirit in the film, *The Bridge*, now being shown in London. Since it was my duty to travel constantly throughout Yugoslavia, I can bear witness, from personal observation, to the fact that it is almost impossible to imagine a people working harder or with more heroic devotion to the task of reconstruction, regardless of personal hardship. I must also pay tribute to the friendly hospitality with which I and my colleagues were received in all parts of the country. In view of all this, it was particularly sad to have to work against difficulties created by the constant attacks to which the Mission and its work, as well as Yugoslavia and its government, were subjected in the American press, and to a lesser extent in Great Britain. It often seemed to us that the American Embassy in Belgrade was merely a collecting agency for every kind of base and petty rumour, promptly cabled to Washington and used as ammunition in the general anti-Yugoslav campaign.

Indicative of the deliberate nature of this propaganda is the fact that the Unrra Regional Officers were rarely consulted either by correspondents or by American Embassy officials. Yet we were responsible for the detailed observation of distribution of Unrra supplies, and were able to travel wherever we wished, gaining first-hand detailed knowledge of the country and the people. This most fascinating aspect of Unrra's activities, providing not only an accurate picture of present-day Yugoslavia but also some very exciting and interesting reading, has received no attention in the British press or on the radio. The public has never been told the story of how the use of its considerable contributions towards Unrra's work has been checked on the spot (nor has it been explained how so many of us have been living quite happily for two years or more behind the "Iron Curtain" and have survived to tell the tale!).

Last summer, we saw the brown parched countryside, and we knew that hunger would once more be the lot of many of the long-suffering Yugoslavs, since Unrra food supplies were to cease. The portion of the funds allocated to Yugoslavia but not expended has been cancelled on American insistence, and potatoes ordered from the United States have been diverted elsewhere. Now that hunger is actually beginning to make itself felt, a new propaganda campaign on the old familiar lines is commencing. We are told that the bread ration was too high, and that grain was thereby wasted. No mention is made of the almost complete absence of meat and other food in many parts of Yugoslavia, and the fact that bread is often practically the *only* food for millions of peasants. A small number of pigs, ready to die of starvation themselves owing to the fodder shortage, was exported. This is taken as an example of abundance of food in the country. In short, every petty excuse is being and will be made to avoid sending grain to Yugoslavia, while supplies continue to pour into Greece, Italy and Austria.

This is the new world economic policy in action. Once again bread is a political weapon. Once more the seeds of suspicion, mistrust and hostility are being sown in Eastern Europe, and friends and potential allies are being lost.

Would it be of any use to hope that those who have been so active in the "Save Europe Now" campaign will pay some attention to the needs of our one-time allies, and show as much concern for their fate as they have shown for that of the people of Germany and Austria? JAMES S. GREGORY, B.A., F.R.G.S.,
Formerly Regional Officer for Serbia,
Unrra Yugoslav Mission.

1 Endsleigh Street, London, W.C.1.

DIPLOMATIC SERVICE

Sir,—There are two sentences in your important article "Economics and Ideology," whose implication bears underlining. "It may well be," you write, "that Mr. Bevin's brief visit to Warsaw . . . marked a turning point in his direction of British foreign policy . . . A few hours in Warsaw were enough to show him that Poland is not a province of the U.S.S.R. but a nation which is trying to reconcile freedom with contiguity to a Great Power, and that Polish Socialists can collaborate with Communists without thereby losing their principles." If it is a fact that a brief visit of a few hours can have such far-reaching and heartening results, it is further evidence that only a thorough overhaul of the diplomatic service can fit it to become an adequate instrument of a Socialist foreign policy.

There is, of course, nothing novel about this suggestion. But it is worth repeating since, even when it has been made by Members of Parliament, it has been rejected both by Mr. Bevin and Mr. McNeil. In reply to a question in the House of Commons on March 20th of last year, for instance, the former maintained that "it will usually be found in future, as in the past, that the men who are best qualified by training, knowledge and experience to assume the responsibility of high diplomatic posts, are those who have made their career in the Foreign Office." True, this was before Mr. Cavendish Bentinck was removed from the Warsaw Embassy. But if he is no longer representing the Labour Government elsewhere or sending his trained and experienced reports for the guidance of the Foreign Secretary, it is not because he was notoriously out of sympathy with the aims of the new democracies. And since we cannot rely on the same happy accident preventing many other "high diplomatic posts" being filled by men with the same "training, knowledge and experience" as Mr. Cavendish Bentinck, it would appear that a drastic course of purging—or, if that is un-British, of promotion—would be a small price to pay for further improvements in British foreign policy. After all, Mr. Bevin can hardly hope to spend even a few hours in the majority of countries where the new world is being born. DOUGLAS GARMAN

2 Rothwell Street, London, N.W.1.

SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS IN FRANCE

SIR,—Your Paris correspondent, in your issue of May 10th, in spite of saying several accurate and interesting things on the Renault strike, is really too biased in favour of the Communists, and is too unfair towards the Socialists.

I am all the more justified in taking this view, as at the Conseil National which decided to maintain the Ramadier Government, I was in agreement with the minority—a minority which, as you know, is formed by almost half the Party. For, in my opinion, the greatest danger for the Socialist Party lay in giving the impression that they were cutting themselves off from the working classes.

But we must honestly recognise that danger was inherent in both alternatives. And many of those who voted in favour of maintaining the Cabinet did so with reluctance and only because they feared that a long period of Ministerial crisis might strengthen de Gaulle.

To which I must add that, in agreement with Paul Ramadier himself, I proposed to the Conseil National

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For instance, it was found that although nearly all informants were able to name correctly 2 or 3 recent British films, 76% of them had no idea which producing company had made them.

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at the end of the meeting that it be decided: (1) that the Government remain in close contact with the C.G.T.; (2) that the Party continue to refuse to take part in any anti-Communist coalition; (3) that the Socialist Ministers leave the Government if it was kept in power by a reactionary majority. And these three points were included in the final resolution which was unanimously voted.

I consider that the Socialists have made many mistakes since the Liberation, and some of them are obsessed by a ridiculous anti-Communist phobia. But one must realise that the Communists place us sometimes in a very difficult position, as for example when they vote against a Cabinet of which they are members and then refuse to resign.

You must believe moreover that several leaders of the Communist Party very much regret what has happened. And they have the greatest desire to support the Ramadier Government, all the more so because they are on good terms with Ramadier himself, the only M.P. who, in 1939, had the courage to oppose the exclusion of the Communists from the House.

I must also protest against the statement made by your correspondent which appears to forecast that the decline of the Socialist Party is inevitable. Local elections prove, on the contrary, that since Leon Blum's Government of December, 1946, we have regained favour. On the other hand, it can be noted that the Communists have lost some of their influence since the last General Election. As proof, I only need to refer to the last vote for the delegates of Social Security.

One sentence in your correspondent's article seems to infer that the Socialists are only fighting de Gaulle half-heartedly. This is not correct. But I would never oppose any statement which encourages Frenchmen to fight against the Gaullist danger to the utmost. I only regret that my British friends amongst the Labour and the Left did not help me more in this task during the war. From 1941 onwards. I explained to them that the General dreamt of becoming a dictator.

LOUIS LEVY,
London correspondent of the *Populaire*.

14 Henrietta St.,
W.C.2.

AFRICAN STUDENTS

SIR,—There are in the United Kingdom to-day over a thousand African students who are completing their education at British universities and colleges. The Colonial Office makes official arrangements for their training and accommodation, but there is a great necessity for unofficial help from the community in general to these young men and women, who often feel lonely and starved of human fellowship. Unless these unofficial efforts are made, the young people will return to their native land without having seen anything of British home-life; if they see only their lodgings and the undesirable side of life in the towns, they will return to Africa disappointed and disillusioned.

I therefore appeal to your readers (especially those resident in London) to invite these "strangers within our gates" to their houses for an occasional meal. Such a friendly act would afford a welcome change and experience for the Africans, and I know that it will also be enjoyed by the hosts and hostesses, because the students all talk English, many of them are scholarship holders, and all of them are worthy and interesting people.

A year ago my predecessor, Dr. de Labilliere (with the support of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Mayor of London, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council), founded the Dean of Westminster's Appeal Fund, whose office at 5, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2, keeps a list of the students. If your readers care to write to this address (mentioning any special preferences they may have, *e.g.*, for an Engineering student, a Nurse, or a Nigerian), the Publicity Director will effect the necessary introduction. Or, benevolent persons who are unable to give practical hospitality may perhaps like to send a donation towards the £50,000 needed for a new centre (with a resident chaplain as liaison officer) which the Africans are hoping to establish in London.

ALAN C. DON,
Dean of Westminster.

The Dean of Westminster's Appeal Fund,
5 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2.

CLYDESIDE

SIR,—I admit David Murray's charge that my interpretation of the Clyde shipbuilding figures was misleading, but I certainly do not admit that production figures invalidate my arguments.

I was stressing, as he does, the paradox of unemployment in the midst of full employment. The fact that a comparison between tonnage "under construction" to-day and the tonnage "launched" during the peak inter-war years is misleading does not alter my point that Clyde shipyard workers are fully employed and the resources of the industry fully engaged—which only makes the 100,000 unemployed a greater challenge.

I argued that while there is apparent prosperity in the traditional industries (I did make a point of the steel risks) Clydeside (and Scotland) cannot afford to rely on tradition. The trading estates and the new industrial developments are supposed to be taking care of that, but I am far from satisfied either with the programme or with the character of the developments. These industries are cuttings, not seedlings, transplants from England (and in some cases from America). They are liable to shrivel in the first economic frost. That is the result of regarding Scotland as a "branch-factory"; with nine out of every ten of its science graduates (because Scotland cannot support them) migrating to do their research elsewhere, and no assurance that the fruits of their research will be applied in Scotland. Scottish industry will be healthy only when it does its own germination.

I do not underestimate the disadvantages from which Scotland suffers. It breeds the kind of discontent which party loyalties cannot assuage. But I thought that that clearly emerged from what I wrote.

RITCHIE CALDER

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

SIR,—Mr. Smurthwaite's arguments in your last issue are doubtless applicable to the Public Schools, where classes average about 25. My own experience, teaching under these conditions, was that indiscipline hardly ever occurred except during occasional lessons which I had not thought out sufficiently in advance.

But in the State schools the classes range from 35 to 50 or even more. Classes of this size are bound to be ill-assorted, except perhaps in the largest multilateral schools; and, in addition, it is almost impossible for the teacher to keep the whole class within his field of vision—a most serious handicap even to a brilliant exponent.

Under such circumstances there is bound to be a mischief-making minority in nearly every class, and a deterrent is necessary from the start to ensure tolerable teaching conditions. I can testify again, from experience, that a sharp rap, *administered on the spot by the teacher concerned*, is by far the most effective for the purpose. It is accepted as reasonable by the boys, perhaps with slightly rueful humour, and breeds far less resentment than any system of impositions, detention, or conduct marks. The danger of its abuse by sadists is negligible; no teacher who overdid it would stand much chance of retaining his job to-day in any school controlled by the public authorities.

J. D. SOLOMON

5 Cambrian Road,
Richmond, Surrey.

CLEMENCY

SIR,—After a press campaign for the execution of certain terrorists who were not proved to have murdered anybody, we have one for the reprieve of Field-Marshal Kesselring, convicted for complicity in a mass murder. Are we mad?

E. C.

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MACMILLAN

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

"No great novel has been written by a Catholic"—some such remark occurs in an essay by Mr. Orwell. How can this fact (in so far as it is a fact) be explained? The most obvious exceptions in the past are *Don Quixote* and *I Promessi Sposi* (a masterpiece that requires to be retranslated). Of the three countries that have produced almost all the great novels, England, Russia and France, only France is to any considerable extent Catholic. Moreover the novel, like the drama, was, until recently, regarded by the Church with deep suspicion as either trivial or actively immoral. (*Télémaque* and *René* have not the merits proper to fiction; Lamartine's *Graziella* is only a *nouvelle;* Huysmans's trilogy is autobiography thinly disguised.) Now, however, Catholics have belatedly perceived that the novel has become the predominant literary form; and they are employing it with outstanding success. In France there is Mauriac (whom I take to be the greatest novelist alive) and Bernanos and the early Montherlant and a number of younger men; in England Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh, and Bruce Marshall (not to mention the authors of *Frost in May* and *The Land of Spices*). A study of Catholic fiction is needed, and I was delighted to find so imaginative a critic as Mr. Rayner Heppenstall attacking a part of the subject in his new book, *The Double Image* (*Secker and Warburg, 8s. 6d.*), the sub-title of which is "A Study of the Christian Myth in the work of Leon Bloy, Georges Bernanos, François Mauriac, Jacques Maritain and Paul Claudel."

The book, harshly described by its author as "brief and unimportant", seems to me exasperating, because it is little more than a collection of jottings—the raw material of a book that might be fascinating. It is full of *obiter dicta* that require justification.

> A fiction is the testing of a myth, a lie told by a child wishing and yet fearful to gain general acceptance for its private fantasies.
>
> The myths embodied in Christian belief are more true to-day than they were at the time of the ecumenical councils which authorised them in the form of those little mnemonic jingles, the creeds and the catechism.
>
> Direct lyrical utterance is only tolerable and indeed only possible within a group whose preconceptions are identical. It communicates little beyond the sense of community.
>
> It seems to me that this is a prose age because it requires us to be terribly explicit.

Mr. Heppenstall gives too small a proportion of his space to his comments upon books, too much to summaries of their plots. The three pages he devotes to Bernanos's *Monsieur Ouine*, for instance, throw no light on this to me incomprehensible novel. Though I found myself often disagreeing with him, and sometimes failing to grasp what he meant, *The Double Image* can be recommended as a stimulus to thought. Mr. Heppenstall forestalls one criticism by candidly stating that in this book he is starting hares, not offering conclusions.

Here is a passage dealing with the background of modern Catholic literature:

> *Homo sapiens* is happiest when his life is based upon a few unquestioned prejudices. Peace of mind seems to result from the belief that society is rational and certain types of behaviour eternally right. That is no doubt why, in the tottering groaning structure of to-day, people are to be found undergoing spasmodic conversion to a primitive or an elaborate form of Christianity, an orgiastic political collectivism or a reactionary nationalism. They desire beyond all retention *to know what to do.* "Knowing" what to do means for the great majority "being told" what to do. This becomes clear not only from the study of Fascism, National Socialism, Communism and Tory Nationalism, from Catholicism and no less from Protestant Revivalism in the work of Karl Barth and his colleagues, but from the tendency of uprooted and uncertain people in the last resort to fall ill and to put themselves in the hands of a doctor. . . .
>
> Catholicism to-day is at once an answer to and symptomatic of the unbalance of the age.

Mr. Heppenstall writes as an infidel. (He was baptised in a Methodist chapel, which may explain why he supposes England to be "a predominantly Calvinist country.") While his book could not fairly be called anti-Catholic, his wish to understand Catholics is sometimes disappointed. He dismisses as ludicrous the horrifying incident in Bloy's *Le Désespéré* of a woman's shaving her head and pulling out her teeth to prevent herself being desirable. Yet the hagiography of the Dark Ages is rich in such gestures. If this act is ludicrous, so is the life of every Carmelite. Again Mr. Heppenstall seems to regard as a private whim of Bloy's the doctrine of Reversibility which proceeds from the Catholic view of Merit and works of supererogation. Otherwise he is interesting on Bloy, in whom he sees an ancestor of Bernanos and Mauriac. Bloy, however, was a soul made furious by agony rather than an artist.

In his discussion of Bernanos he includes a stimulating discussion of the psychological value of scapegoats (among which he classes Bernanos's priests).

> To-day we have lost the sense of our own guilt. It is always "they" and never "we" who have sinned. In this respect we have fallen below the moral and indeed the psychological level of "the cunning and selfish savage." Anti-Semitism and Vansittartism do not properly employ Jews or Germans as scapegoats. They impute sin to the victim and name it as the cause of the people's misfortunes. The function of a true scapegoat is beneficial, and scapegoats are to be loved.

To speak of "imputing" sin to the Germans strikes me as an understatement, but one of Mr. Heppenstall's liveliest hares is the notion that our narrative and dramatic literature may be a concerted effort to find and employ scapegoats. One more word on Bernanos. Immensely creditable as was his book on the Franco atrocities he had witnessed in Majorca, to say nothing of his assaults on Vichy, he should not be described without qualification as "a man tender and generous in public affairs." Mr. Heppenstall avoids any mention of his book in praise of Drumont, which is deliriously anti-Semitic.

Mr. Heppenstall has chosen to concern himself with ideas and plots almost to the exclusion of imagery and style in general—which seems to me the least rewarding approach to imaginative literature. This helps to explain his low opinion of Mauriac; it has not, however, prevented him from giving generous praise to Claudel, and particularly to *Le soulier de satin*, a sublime work, I must admit, though for my part, liking poetry to be deflated and dense, I find much of Claudel too rhapsodic. He reminds me often of Victor Hugo, sometimes of Whitman. Saturated in the Vulgate, he has invented a diction in French idiom analogous to that of our Authorised Version. No other living writer has an imagination on so large a scale. He possesses, moreover, vast culture, a sense of the theatre and, intermittently, a rich sense of comedy. Mr. Heppenstall applies to him the terminology of Pareto, and, as so often in this book, I wish he had pursued this thought. Claudel's Catholicism is chivalrous, not ascetic — mystically responsive to beauty in women, to courage in men. His work, at any rate his theatre, is accordingly concentrated on exalting Honour, a notion extraneous, if not actively hostile, to Christianity.

Mauriac, in my opinion, Mr. Heppenstall grossly underestimates and misunderstands. He compares *Destins*, with Colette's admirable *Chéri* only to condemn Mauriac for feeling towards the "hero" a love that is "purely caritative, all *agape* and no *eros*." In my view one of Mauriac's supreme gifts is his power to depict and express the character of a woman's love for a young man. (In most of his novels the action is seen through the eyes of a woman, with whom in the manner of the greatest novelists Mauriac marvellously identifies himself.) Mr. Heppenstall emphasises the gloom in M. Mauriac's books: "Nobody has any fun at all," which sounds like a description of Sartre; and he adds that "the trend of Mauriac's religious apologetic is so to present the world that without God it would be intolerable." I prefer to say that his characters with a few saintly exceptions are far too consistently disagreeable. This need not be attributed only to Catholicism; it is indeed traditional in free-thinking French novelists, from Balzac and Stendhal through Flaubert and Maupassant to Proust and the later Montherlant. I am amazed that they take such a black view of human nature, having myself found in France friends whose kindness and generosity are unsurpassable. Faced with the inconsistencies natural to Man, the French apply logic where we use a sense of humour. However correct La Rochefoucauld's diagnosis of motives, the human conduct that results from them can be delightful.

Throughout his book Mr. Heppenstall insists upon the tendency of Catholic literature to become heretical, and he seems to me to reveal an incomplete acquaintance with French Catholicism when he says that M. Mauriac is "a Protestant at heart." The boisterous, vinous or beery Catholicism of Belloc, Chesterton and Mr. J. B. Morton has never had a parallel in France (or, so far as I know, anywhere outside this island). It was a Frenchman, Armand de Rancé, who inaugurated the extreme austerity of the Trappists. The Jansenists, so far from being Protestant, were rigid conservatives who deplored the "development" of Catholic doctrine, of which the Jesuits were then the champions. It was a Frenchman again, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, who imposed the most drastic severity upon the Cistercians; and no more powerful literary expression of asceticism pushed to its logical conclusion can be found than the *Pensées* of the twelfth-century Carthusian, Prior Guigue. François de Sales, on the other hand, who may be thought the most amiable of French saints, I cite as the exception that proves the rule: for he was a Savoyard, and so only dubiously a Frenchman. Such instances suggest that Mauriac writes from the centre of the French Catholic tradition.

Remorselessly as he describes the depravity of the human heart, Mauriac is intensely and poetically responsive to sensuous beauty, to sights and sounds and scents, to the inordinate charm also of youthful high spirits. His books gain great richness from his experience of what Pascal calls "l'usage délicieux et criminel du monde." They express the anguish of a man torn asunder, "a man who has chosen to live divided against himself." He has described himself as "a metaphysician who works in the concrete," who seeks to bring home to all our senses "the Catholic universe of evil." He incarnates, puts into flesh, "the theologians' idea of the Sinner." In his terrifying novels of family life he uses modern notions of heredity to support the orthodox and so difficultly acceptable doctrine of Original Sin: "The intrinsic sinner (*le pècheur en soi*) is a myth," he declares, "what does exist is an accumulation of inherited tendencies."

Mr. Heppenstall goes to the root of his matter in the following sentences:

> M. Mauriac writes, needless to say, about sin. Yet, as with Graham Greene, it is not particularly easy to distinguish sin in this context from what in a pagan novelist would pass for neurosis, except in so far as the author, in his manner of speech, betrays greater agitation.

Is not this equally true of all tragic literature, Greek as well as Christian, though the Greeks regarded sin as a defilement more physical than moral? Listen again to Mr. Heppenstall:

> Sometimes sex is awful, sometimes it is funny. Rather occasionally, it is like a clap of thunder and a revelation. At its married best, it is a gay, instructive, sensitising and well-mannered game.

One may agree; and at the same time insist that a suspension of disbelief in sin is requisite in the reader not only of Mauriac but of Sophocles, Dante, Racine and Tolstoy. I suggest indeed that a belief in sin as distinct from neurosis is what makes Catholicism such a signal advantage to the modern novelist. The rationalist will not agitate himself gravely or for long about the location of spermatozoa. If he does become infected with the same misery as Othello, he will despise himself for his folly; and, in the situation of Oedipus, he could justifiably feel a guiltless participant in an unimportant, if unlucky, episode. To the Catholic, on the other hand, no human act or passing thought is trivial. A lie, even if made only out of politeness or to spare the feelings of an acquaintance, is more to be deplored than a famine or a cholera that destroys millions. Every action of the individual is the focus of a struggle between God and Satan: it may decide whether through eternity his lot shall be superhuman happiness or unimaginable pain. While the rationalist is not debarred from being the author—or for that matter the hero—of a tragedy, he is at a great disadvantage compared with the believer. The sense of morality, however acute, covers a far smaller area and is possessed of far less intensity than the sense of sin.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

GREEKS IN THE AMERICAN EMPIRE

This House Against This House. VINCENT SHEEAN. *Macmillan.* 16*s.*

Top Secret. RALPH INGERSOLL. *Partridge.* 15*s.*

Operation Victory. MAJOR-GENERAL SIR FRANCIS DE GUINGAND. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 25*s.*

It is rumoured that whenever a new member of his Staff arrived in Algiers, Harold Macmillan, then political adviser to General Eisenhower, would give him a short but unforgettable "briefing." "This," he would say, "is an American Empire. In any room in this Headquarters you will find two officers, the senior American and the junior British. The senior officer will be sitting with his feet on the table, and a cigar in his mouth. His 'in-tray' will be empty. The junior officer will be hard at work. You must accept this relationship as both natural and desirable. Like the rest of us, you must do the work but never ask for the credit; you must draft the plans, keep the minutes and be tolerant of conferences in which nothing is definitely settled. Above all, you must *never* let your American superior feel that you regard yourself as better at the job. We are the Greeks of this Empire: and, by accepting the fact without mortification, we can turn it to the interests of our country."

Though this story may be apocryphal, it sums up an aspect of Anglo-American relations of which these three books are all illustrations. Mr. Ingersoll, who was attached first to the American planning staff in London and then to General Bradley's XII Army Group, was mordantly aware of it. Other reviewers have already exposed the innumerable inaccuracies of fact which make *Top Secret* almost a classic of military semi-literacy. But these inaccuracies do not destroy its value as a document. Here are filed for reference all the rumours, scandals and vituperation which were the small talk of American messes during the war. Mr. Ingersoll is not of course a typical American; but the extremity and articulateness of his Anglophobia enables him to print all the things which his more gentlemanly colleagues only whispered in their cups and refused to believe when sober. Because he is not a very pleasant fellow and has little regard for accuracy, he has composed a brilliant but unconscious caricature of the American staff officer: with his sense of technical and moral superiority and of political inferiority *vis-à-vis* this country. Mr. Ingersoll is smart enough to realise that the Greeks of the American Empire got their way because they worked as a team, and treated war not as a total break with peacetime behaviour but as an extension of policy, whereas the Americans, to use his own words "waged war without regard to the possible disturbance of the post-war balance of power in Europe." They just wanted to win and go home.

Mr. Sheean who served with the Army Air Force in North Africa, India, and China, and then covered the closing stages of the Western offensive as a correspondent, is smoother and more sophisticated than Mr. Ingersoll, but he too had little use for Anglo-American teamwork. When he wrote *This House Against This House* he was convinced that, in the Mediterranean, Churchillian "neo-Fascism" had carried the day against American democracy, and against the anti-Fascist Socialists and Communists in Italy, Greece and Spain. His experience as liaison officer with the French in North Africa made him a hard-boiled supporter of the Eisenhower policy and the Darlan deal. But Badoglio and the King of Greece—and Mihailovitch—seemed to him to present different problems, because they were the "agents of British imperialism" whereas Darlan was "a genuine representative of French feeling." *This House Against This House* is worth reading because it reveals the inner contradictions of American liberal thought. Whereas Mr. Ingersoll is an eccentric, slapdash Anglophobe, Russophile and isolationist, who will always be out of step with everyone else, Mr. Sheean can march with the times. His liberalism which is ruthless in its exposure of British Imperialism or German aggressiveness, becomes a good deal less uncompromising when American interests are concerned. I wonder how he feels now that it is an American Administration which is supporting "neo-Fascism" in Greece and Turkey. It is one thing to root from the sidelines against Mr. Churchill and quite another to civilise an American Empire.

One of the best chapters of *This House Against This House* is that on Mr. Sheean's experiences in India and China. Contrasting Indian subservience with the independent spirit of the Chinese, he writes, with obvious approval of the Chinese: "They exploit each other ruthlessly but success in such exploitation is rather admired than condemned." This is as true of America as of China. Capitalism in the U.S.A. is not merely an economic system but a way of life with its own ethical values, accepted by its liberal opponents as well as by its protagonists. Whereas the real criticism of British Conservatism is that it failed to exploit the resources of its Empire and preferred secure profits to cut-throat competition, an American Empire would conscientiously sacrifice the security of America and the welfare of the subject peoples on the altar of free enterprise. It would display a Roman respect for wealth without the Roman respect for law and order. That is why American Socialism is almost a contradiction in terms and why the hope that we can play the role of twentieth-century Greeks is probably illusory.

General de Guingand presents the other side of the Anglo-American shield. His book, a thoroughly readable mixture of anecdote and military commentary, is written in a style of most artful simplicity which conceals from any but the initiated its highly controversial character. After a brief appreciation of Mr. Hore-Belisha, under whom he served in the War Office, the General relates his personal experiences in the Mediterranean, France and Germany, as Chief of Staff to Field-Marshal Montgomery. It would be unfair to compare this classic narrative of a distinguished professional soldier with the erratic reflections of Mr. Ingersoll and Mr. Sheean. But reading them together, it is amusing to observe the national characteristics which are the root of Anglo-American friction.

Operation Victory is unfair by American standards because its polemics are shrouded in courtesy. It is not "homespun" to use Mr. Ingersoll's proudest American adjective and its author never "takes his hair down." Its candour and detachment are only superficial. Here is exactly the type of precise, cool, professional British Staff Officer that infuriated the superiors of Mr. Ingersoll and Mr. Sheean by refusing to quarrel and yet getting his own way. No book expresses better than *Operation Victory* the qualities of British Generalship or indicates more clearly the causes of Anglo-American irritation.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

THE SEPARATIVE GLASS CLOAK

Alamein to Zem Zem. By KEITH DOUGLAS. Editions Poetry London, *Nicholson and Watson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Late in 1942 Keith Douglas ran away from a staff job to rejoin his regiment, fought with the tanks through the subsequent desert campaigns, returned to England, and was killed in Normandy a few days after D-Day. In *Alamein to Zem Zem*, now published three years after his death, is provided not only an exceptional account of tank warfare in the desert, but a selection (not the whole, as the blurb suggests) of his Middle East poetry, and a collection of sketches—three in full colour. The promise of his painting will not now be fulfilled, but in prose and poetry Douglas had already reached a finished stature. He takes his place easily among that small group of young writers lost in the war, including Alun Lewis, Sidney Keyes, Richard Hillary, and Stephen Haggard, who had before their deaths achieved something beyond the adulation of literary myth-makers. And his forthcoming collection of poems, *Bête Noire*, should still further establish him.

In an earlier version of his poem "Syria" Douglas has a verse beginning:

> Here I am a stranger clothed
> in the separative glass cloak
> of strangeness.

That "separative glass cloak" is the leading impression that is received now from his work. This is not to say that he was an escapist or that he avoided reality—far from it. He saw perfectly clearly and vividly through the glass armour; it was only to him as a protection against those physical and artistic faults arising from too direct contact. It enabled him to have no fear, to record without overflowing emotion, to produce a natural yet human account of his experiences. Thus he endeavours in his diary to give the impression of a looking-glass land in which certain things that are real and terrible wear an appearance of unreality. His battles have the surrealist flush that opium gave to the writings of De Quincey, and they are ominously silent, like dreams.

> The view from a moving tank is like that in a camera obscura or a silent film—in that since the engine drowns all other voices except explosions, the whole world moves silently. Men shout, vehicles move, aeroplanes fly over, and all soundlessly; the noise of the tank being continuous, perhaps for hours on end, the effect is of silence. . . . Silence is a strange thing to us who live: we desire it, we fear it, we worship it, we hate it. There is a divinity abouts cats as long as they are silent: the silence of swans gives them an air of legend. The most impressive thing about the dead is their triumphant silence, proof against anything in the world.

The dead, since they no longer exist, are curious rather than frightening. They remind one of Rimbaud's "Le Dormeur de Val," or of cleverly posed waxworks, or even of "trippers taken ill"; just as the shattered tanks, broken machinery, and deserted gunpits become foliage growing naturally among desert scenery; and Douglas's fellow-officers and men are bizarre characters sharing with him the exploration of this dangerous yet bewildering wonderland. (He was bizarre himself in a way.) Their voices crackle on the intercomm to be recorded faithfully though the tale be of tragedy. "Nuts three calling. We 'ave, er, 'ad a misfortune. The horse 'as fallen, driver is no more. Can we 'ave Monkey Orange?" To understand this tongue is to know that a gunner who has seen one of his friends beheaded and another bleeding from a great wound has forgotten his wireless procedure. But he must get out the unconscious corporal and bandage him roughly, for the tank is burning and he is bleeding to death.

Or there may be a nightmare journey after Douglas's own tank has been hit, when the friendly tanks around him are discovered to be burnt out with not a living soul in any of them, and a corporal with no right foot mounts his back like an Old Man of the Sea. So trudging wearily onward, trying to avoid enemy guns and the trip wires of mines, Douglas comes across two wounded crawling along the sand.

> I looked at the second man. Only his clothes distinguished him as a human being, and they were badly charred. His face had gone: in place of it was a huge yellow vegetable. The eyes blinked in it, eyes without lashes, and a grotesque huge mouth dribbled and moaned like a child exhausted with crying.

Yet it would not be true to say that Douglas did not *feel* or was without pity. His pity is all the greater for being thus oblique and hard, a pity with icy tears.

> A yard more, and my little finger
> could trace the maquillage of these stony actors

he says in "Desert Flowers," but he is himself "the figure writhing on the backcloth." And though the still living could make him weep, what would be the use? Weeping cannot save them. So the sleepers in "The Offensive" are pictured sadly as "waiting for their wounds," and the "logical little fish" at Mersa Matruh nibble at the living flesh:

> imagining I am one of the dead.

Sighting the cannon of his tank, Douglas can reflect on "How easy it is to make a ghost," and returning to an old 88 gunsite to find the dead body of the gunner lying beside a picture of his girl he can say:

> But she would weep to see to-day
> how on his skin the swart flies move,
> the dust upon the paper eye
> and the burst stomach like a cave.

There is pity here in the "paper eye" and the "cave" just as there was pity earlier in the "huge yellow vegetable" and the "child exhausted with crying." Douglas' writing is thus most *natural* in the effects it achieves from ordinary images, and this is true even where the poetry seems to be breaking across some other war, a dream war giving the impression of having been fought a long time ago.

And the feeling that nothing is permanent, anyway, helps out the cold quietness.

> But Time, who ate my love, you cannot make
> such another; you who can remake
> the lizard's tail and the bright snakeskin
> cannot, cannot. That you gobbled in
> too quick, and though you brought me from a boy
> you can make no more of me, only destroy.

Here, perhaps, is the source of the "glass cloak." In the world of "Time Eating" the momentary vision is everything, and must be recorded at all costs; amid inevitable destruction it is the only solace. And to see it as Douglas did is to see it clearly, without dust or distraction.

JOHN WALLER

THE LAWGIVER

Moses. By MARTIN BUBER. *East and West Library*, Oxford. *12s. 6d.*

The Tables of the Law. By THOMAS MANN. *Secker and Warburg.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Although there is but one original record of the life of Moses, and therefore those comparisons which are so useful in other cases are impossible, yet it is the belief of most scholars that he is an historical character. This belief Dr. Buber shares, and he uses it to "historicise" the saga as it has come down to us, largely by omitting miraculous elements. The result is a multitude of conjectures presented as certainties, which make a very attractive picture, but which are far from likely to command universal assent. Thus, for example, we are assured that the Pharaoh of the Oppression was not, as often thought, Ramses but Thothmes, and that Moses founded the Twelve Tribes. He believes the tale of the breaking of the Two Tables, and holds that the Sabbath was adopted from another nation, perhaps from Midian. He asserts that the so-called "Song of Moses" dates probably from Mosaic times.

Equally dubious are the things he disbelieves. Thus, surprisingly, he rejects the theory first propounded by Goethe in 1773, and accepted by many scholars since, that the Ten Commandments, or rather ten Taboos, given us in the thirty-fourth chapter of Exodus, were earlier than those which are repeated every Sunday. That "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk" is not due to a mere barbarous superstitution, I find it hard to accept even on Dr. Buber's authority.

But the book is so learned—the two hundred notes show the width of Dr. Buber's reading—and so suggestive at every turn, that one can only be grateful for it even when one ventures to differ. The exact and literal translations of many Hebrew phrases—Dr. Buber often, wisely, disregards elegance for the sake of precision—give rise to constant thought; and the conjectures, if far from being always certainties, throw light on many obscurities, and compel the reader to notice how careless his study has been. Here I would particularly mention the chapter on the "Covenant" and the one entitled "Upon Eagles' Wings." Many people who think they are familiar with the Bible will discover from these pages how ignorant they are.

One most important suggestion is that the Mosaic law owes much to the Code of Hammurabi, but Dr. Buber does not tell us how that Code could have come into the hands of Moses, or how he was able to read it even if he had it before him. It would appear likely that these borrowings, if such they are, were made when Israel had become a nation, and had entered into relations with the countries of the Euphrates—that is, at a time centuries later than Moses.

The Tables of the Law is a book of an entirely different character. In it Thomas Mann, already widely known to English readers by similar treatments of Biblical subjects, endeavours to work the story of Moses into a sort of romance. While keeping as close as possible to the original document, except that he seems to know far more about Joshua than any scholar before him, he aims by means of a lively and picturesque style at making the narrative more attractive than the original to those readers who, accustomed to modern novels and to little besides, may find the language of Exodus or Leviticus somewhat cumbrous. How far he succeeds is a matter of taste. For myself, I prefer the Authorised Version—but with the proviso that it should be read with the help of a good commentary, in which the different strata of the story are clearly distinguished.

E. E. KELLETT

A RETURN VISIT

African Journey By ESLANDA GOODE ROBESON. *Gollancz.* 9*s.*

Eslanda Goode Robeson is Negro; and as she is intelligent and well-educated, it seems almost inevitable that she should also be interested in anthropology. The "Negro problem" as a branch of the subject must have affected her from childhood. In America she thought she was well-informed about it. When she came to England she was "disconcerted by the fact that the Negro problem was not only the problem of the 13 million Negroes in America, but was and is the far greater problem of the 150 million Negroes in Africa . . . as well as the problem of

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all minorities everywhere." So she began to study the wider problems, by reading everything she could find on the subject, and by attending the seminars of Malinowski and others.

It was then she came on a snag she had not expected. Previously she had thought herself, as Negro, entitled to speak for the whole race. But in England she found that people who had spent years teaching and administrating in South Africa thought otherwise. She had, they said, never been there; and anyway she was "special"—she was educated, and did not understand primitive minds. And so to prove them wrong she decided to see for herself.

On May 29th, 1936, Mrs. Robeson set out for Capetown taking her eight-year-old son with her. Her delight in his company is one of the charms of the book; it is never overdone—whereas "Big Paul's" voice comes over the telephone "big and warm" just a little too often. As soon as she reached Capetown she was besieged by reporters; and it immediately becomes apparent how very "special" she is. For she is not only Negro, but also very American: and the wife of a famous American—Paul Robeson—at that. While he worked in London to overcome any official resistance, she herself was passed from friend to friend, being lent cars throughout most of her journey, so that she travelled thousands of miles with very little inconvenience. This was no doubt the most comfortable way of doing it; but hardly satisfactory for anyone who really wanted to know what it would be like to be a primitive African.

Like all good Americans, of course, she tried to see everything, from the fearful conditions of Negro workers in Capetown and Johannesburg, to elephants, tigers, and the making of banana wine in Uganda. But she rarely devoted more than a day to anything. On one occasion she went by car to visit a Pygmy tribe in the Congo. The drive took many hours; yet when she arrived she seems to have spent little more than half an hour with them, and more than three-quarters of her account is quotation from other books.

The same kind of criticism is true of what she has to say about South Africa. There the Native and European cultures are in the greatest contact and conflict, so naturally her anthropological inclinations come to the fore. Much of what she saw shocked her, and rightly. But she makes no attempt to present a balanced picture: indeed, as she only spent three weeks there during which she contrived to travel from Capetown via Port Elizabeth inland to Johannesburg and up to Mozambique, it is difficult to see how she could. She fills her journal with extracts from semi-official reports, but so without order that she gives the impression of having seized on anything that came her way, provided only that it suited her purpose. There is no sense of progression in her argument: she has only succeeded in verifying a small part of what she already believed—and her method ensures that. Her only conclusion is the rather obvious one that African Negroes need far more education.

Much of *African Journey* is interesting, and to those who do not know Africa possibly unfamiliar—it might even prick the complacency of some people: only they won't read it. But in no respect can it be entertained as anthropology. Of course, there is no reason why Mrs. Robeson should write anthropology. *African Journey* could perfectly well be a straight "travel book." For this Mrs. Robeson has many natural advantages. She has a quick eye, and an intense curiosity, combined with that native shrewdness and lack of self-consciousness so often to be found in American tourists. Sometimes it is embarrassing; but on the whole it enables her to see and do more; and in this she is certainly aided by being herself Negro.

The style of the book is not distinguished. It is a familiar blend of journalism and homeliness—but she might have avoided words like "cute" and "comfy" and have rationed her "elegants" (what is an "elegant breakfast?"). Still the book is readable, and that is not to be sneered at. But undoubtedly as a travel book it is marred by its pretensions to being something else. If only Mrs. Robeson had never heard of anthropology . . . And why did she wait ten years to publish it? But when all has been said, Mrs. Robeson has just enough talent to raise the book above the ordinary level of its fellows.

JOHN BUTLER

HUNTING SHADOWS

Class Struggles in Ancient Greece. By MARGARET O. WASON. *Gollancz.* 12s. 6d.

The purpose of this book is as admirable as its achievement is disappointing. Mrs. Wason does not claim to develop anything like a comprehensive survey of class struggles in ancient Greece, but concentrates our attention on the economic revolution which produced the city-states of the historical period, and in particular on Athens and Sparta. In the course of her survey we are offered what purports to be a new analysis of the Bronze Age, of the role of the tyrants in the revolutionary period which is her principal concern, of Sparta's foreign policy and delayed economic and political transformation in comparison with other city-states, of Rome's eventual intervention in Greek affairs, and of slavery in general. If the results really justified these confident announcements, the prejudiced reader would probably make light of Mrs. Wason's tribute to the values of Marxist theory in her foreword to the book, and dismiss it as an irrelevant intrusion into the safely dead past. But the claims are not vindicated. In fact, the weakness in the manner and method of presentation, the easy and misleading parallels which are drawn, the loose and often quite incorrect generalizations and the superficial judgments, might well cause the same prejudiced reader to lay all the blame on the bad influences of Marxist theory. The safely dead past would come alive in proportion to the perceived degree of error.

The past is important, and Marxists claim that a scientific understanding of the past and its motivation can help to guide us in the present crisis of our civilization. Mrs. Wason writes out of this conviction, but what she has written is not Marxism. She writes of history as a series of waves, advancing one after the other, resolving contradictions, breaking up and receding, but never receding quite back to their starting-points, and always advancing to higher levels than their predecessors. That Mrs. Wason should choose such a mechanical metaphor to illustrate her argument is significant. To say that man's history moves in waves is to say that it is propelled by outside forces. Mechanical materialism and idealism tend to go together.

If Mrs. Wason had sought for a metaphor in organic nature, her historical thinking would not have been invalidated by this most un-Marxist mode of thought. She would not have written a history of ancient Greece in terms of the class struggle in Western Europe since the breakdown of feudalism. She would not have failed completely to understand the progressive role of feudalism after the breakdown of the Roman Empire. She would have made some attempt to analyse the differences between serfdom and slavery sufficiently clearly to prevent herself from writing such a sentence as: "It is not surprising to hear that in Sparta a freeman was most a freeman and a slave or serf most a slave." She would have been more wary of introducing such concepts as *feudal*, *semi-feudal* and *bourgeois* into the ancient world, and she might perhaps have decided not to introduce them at all. She would

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not have sought constantly for parallels which merely emphasize the fallacy that history mechanically repeats itself. She would then more properly have written a history of ancient Greece in terms of the dialectics of its own development, of its own class struggles.

So far as the substance of the book is concerned, Mrs. Wason quite rightly is at pains to stress the importance of the discovery of iron and the alphabet, but, although she deals with the subject of iron-working with some of the detail it deserves, she is content to give a superficial account of the development of the alphabet and is so eager to discredit Phoenician influences that she fails to give due credit to the assimilation of the Phoenician alphabet. She is most persuasively original on the subject of the Roman Senate's decision to intervene in Greece in 200 B.C., but here exaggerates the political at the expense of the economic factors in the situation. One finds nothing so radically new in her treatment of the tyranny or in her study of Sparta's development. For example, even a cursory reading of the shortened version of the *Golden Bough* will throw more light on the Spartan double kingship than does Mrs. Wason.

When dealing with statistics Mrs. Wason is alarming. On one occasion she fixes the relation of income of well-to-do to that of workers at 23: 1, apparently on the strength of the analysis of one rich man's income. Her attempt to unsettle Thucydides from his pedestal with the support of half a flimsy paragraph is ludicrously quixotic. But she is least happy when she turns from history to peep at culture. Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes are summarily interred with jargon and clichés. About Aeschylus doubt remained even after proof reading, for on one page he is unconscious of his relation to society, and on the next page is fully conscious. (It is not clear whether one of the most important Marxist theoretical works written in English over the past decade, George Thomson's *Aeschylus and Athens*, has been taken into account or not.) And Aristotle is a doubtful authority to cite on third century B.C. history, because he was dead.

RONALD WILLETTS

TWO RUSSIANS

Pushkin and Russian Literature. By JANKO LAVRIN. *English Universities Press.* 5s.

Dostoievsky. By J. C. POWYS. *John Lane.* 7s. 6d.

Fyodor Dostoievsky. By J. A. T. LLOYD. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 12s. 6d.

Some may ask what Pushkin has to say to us to-day; the idea has spread that he was a Byronic "genius," and our situation calls for something more than a mere Romantic. In fact—as Professor Lavrin's useful digest reminds us—the Byronic element in Pushkin played no part in the work of his maturity. He was a solitary, and an individualist. The best in his work was a spark struck between the steel of his intellect and the flint of his society—all that horribly boring Petersburg "life" which for him was only death. His physical death was something very like suicide. It should not be forgotten that he was a "post-war" writer—in 1815 he was 16 years old, and already a published poet—and, true to his kind, he was infected by the germ of spiritual weariness which wars engender.

It is not the aim of this book to view Pushkin except against the background of his time. It is a workmanlike introduction to Pushkin, written in a condensed, cool style. The book owes more than a little to Prince D. S. Mirsky's book on Pushkin, and one would have liked to see a clearer acknowledgment to Mirsky than the title of his book in the bibliography conveys.

Mirsky deserves credit for what is his, if only because he receives such a trouncing at the hands of Mr. Powys whose style is far from condensed and cool. He approaches Dostoievsky as an avowed Anglo-Celtic Wordsworthian, and it is his aim to present not the Russian's meaning but an idea of the impact the great novels have had on Mr. Powys himself. This complicates rather than simplifies his task; and it is a complication which many readers of Dostoievsky will consider unnecessary. What will warm the cockles of the heart is the author's enthusiasm. There is none of Professor Lavrin's cautiousness about Mr. Powys. He comes straight out into the open: "I challenge my readers . . . to show me a greater novelist in any modern language than Dostoievsky." Haters of Dostoievsky—and there are plenty of them—will have a lot of unkind fun at the expense of Mr. Powys' style. It pokes you in the waistcoat with innumerable italicised phrases, it bludgeons you with exclamation marks, and it picks you up and dusts you down with a big-hearted "Well!" Too many sentences which begin as a welcome fresh wind end in a squall. All these defects are justified, however, because the author has a job in hand, and decided ideas on how it ought to be done.

Mr. Powys ascribes Dostoievsky's impact to the fact that he is a "psychic medium" in touch with a fourth dimension and what is called "real reality." He leaves the reader to puzzle out these terms for himself. They may mean that Dostoievsky belonged to the hysteric type of artist, and that he was a few degrees more acutely dissociated than most others. The trouble with Mr. Powys is that he tends to beat others with the bones of Dostoievsky, who, he says, outdated almost all psycho-analysis. Surely it would be more just to Dostoievsky to say that his enormous significance to-day lies in the fact that he predicted the chief hypothesis of Freud with his obsession with man's constant struggle against paternal authority, and with Ivan Karamazov's "We all desire the death of our fathers," and predicted Jung's "achievement of death" *motif* with Father Zossima's "the attainment of death." But it would be fruitless to argue this point with Mr. Powys, because he appears to set little store by psycho-analysis. Anyway, if his book leads more readers to Dostoievsky, he will be happy, whether they agree with his mystical interpretation or not—and it is that implication which makes his book attractive in spite of its overstressed personal dogmas.

Throughout Mr. Lloyd's book, a biography which will give pleasure to admirers of the Russian writer and food for thought to those who come freshly to Dostoievsky, the author shows great reluctance to accept the suggestion that psychological interpretation of the great novels might be useful. On one page he writes of one of Dostoievsky's dreams: "The late Sigmund Freud might well have hesitated to detect in it the faintest gleam of putrescence." This sounds like a jibe in the worst of taste, particularly as Mr. Lloyd, in arguing that Dostoievsky did not feel guilt on the score of his father's murder, writes with uneasy superficiality. In fact the writer of this interesting account of Dostoievsky's life and labour is not slinging mud at the Viennese psycho-analyst, for he suddenly states, almost on the last page of his book: "Though it is perfectly true that Freud was unable to account for Dostoievsky, it may be equally true that it is only through Freud that a real approach to the great Russian writer is possible." This is quite compatible with the sound conclusion that "he read unerringly not the answers but the questions of the human heart," and that he "was no philosopher." Both Mr. Powys and Mr. Lloyd agree with other critics that he was a psychologist with very great powers. Had they accepted also the fact that Freud was no more of a philosopher than Dostoievsky, the outlines of their books might

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have been clearer, and Mr. Lloyd would not have worried so much about clearing his subject of the Strakhov-Gide accusation. Dostoievsky needs no defence; he needs elucidation.

Ivan Roe

Week-end Competitions

No. 900

Set by Saint-Loup

A patriotic member of Parliament having demanded that the bill of fare in the House of Commons restaurant be entirely in English, competitors are invited to suggest appropriate translations of *mayonnaise, fond d'artichaut, meunière, meringue, mille-feuille, charlotte russe, vol-au-vent, pâté maison* and *à la carte*. Entries by June 3.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 897

Set by William Whitebait

The usual prizes are offered for a letter to a newspaper, putting forward practical proposals for the removal of St. Paul's Cathedral to a new site, thereby overcoming an obstruction to the development of London. Details of the process of removal, and of the site will be welcome. Length 250 words.

Report by William Whitebait

It being generally agreed that St. Paul's must go, ingenious and (one hopes) practical suggestions have been made on the subject of transport; for destination, Hampstead Heath, the site facing the Taj Mahal, Goodwin Sands, White Horse Hill, Red Square, Madison Gardens, Gibraltar, and Torrowangee (New South Wales) are among the more suitable. Prizes of 31*s.* 6*d.* each are awarded to the following.

Sir,—Not being an architect, a removal contractor, or even a Londoner, I feel somewhat diffident about intervening in this correspondence; but, as a plain man, I find it surprising that no one has suggested the one obviously suitable new site for our great cathedral. I mean, of course, the salubrious heights of Sydenham, left vacant by the disappearance of the Crystal Palace. I believe this has only to be mentioned to elicit a chorus of wholehearted agreement. The site is so universally known that details would be supererogatory, and it only remains for me to deal with the problem of transport. Fortunately, this turns out to be almost as simple as the determination of the site. Memory of the Dunkirk evacuation gives us the clue. Just as the whole of Britain's shipping, from row-boats to liners, hastened to and fro across the Channel with cargoes of exhausted heroes, so the wheeled, winged and caterpillared transport of London must be mobilised for the great task of removing St. Paul's, stone by stone, from where it obstructs industrial development to the place on which it is to be re-erected. I envisage millions of vehicles, from perambulators to Sherman tanks, from one-man gliders to enormous dirigibles, snaking across London with patriotic energy and pious, religious zeal. Possibly a strong cluster of barrage balloons might hold the great dome in suspense till the old walls are ready for it—I just throw out the suggestion. The whole work might be topically known as Operation Bits-and-Pieces.

Yours, etc.,
(REV.) Ephraim Poljambe
(Allan M. Laing)

Sir,—When, on U.S. Government service, I last visited London, I felt that the development of your fine city could be improved by replacing the domed edifice overlooking Ludgate Circus by some building more in keeping with the local crafts. Surely in that great centre of the written word, a building such as that of the *Daily Express*, black and soot-proof, would add grandeur to the old city. A giant statue of one of your famous leaders could bestride the roof and the latest news be flashed from his mouth at night.

St. Paul's itself would be more at home in my little old-world village in Massachusetts which needs a village church. It could be removed by yacht, as was Dronderry Castle, which I bought in 1937. Unfortunately my old yacht was destroyed in the Chinese war at the beginning of this year. However, a new one should soon be ready. My foreman is an expert at numbering bricks before demolition and at re-erecting them. In moving the Castle, out of 46,271,698 bricks and sundries 45,162,391 were re-erected in their correct place and suitable niches were found for most of the rest. Only 6,798 numbered specimens were left over. These were successfully assembled into a small drug store.

I feel sure that after the experience thus obtained the re-erection of St. Paul's will be quite authentic, and should any little pieces be left over there is need for a gasoline station on my estate.

Hyram P. Sykleshummer
(Richard J. H. Isaacs)

Sir,—Now that all traffic experts are agreed that, as an obstruction to the much-desired arterial route through the City of London, the siting of St. Paul's Cathedral is well-nigh intolerable, it is surely time to seriously tackle the problem of its removal.

This presents no serious difficulty. Having cleared a way between the Cathedral and the river, it would be an easy matter to flood the foundations of the building with water, allowing a surplus to flow down toward the river. The water, having been frozen with suitable refrigerating plant, would form an artificial glacier, and the building with an original impetus applied by explosives, would, obeying the laws of gravity, slide gently to the river, where it could be transferred to a submerged raft of water-filled "caissons" subsequently made buoyant by pumping out their contents.

The whole building could then be towed to any downstream position desired. The cost of temporary removal and rebuilding of a few bridges would be amply covered by the site values to be realised from the Cathedral site.

Moored at the end of Southend Pier the Cathedral would prove a valuable additional attraction to that town; alternatively the building might in calm weather be towed to U.S.A. and sold in part payment of the American Loan.

I have prepared detailed plans and estimates for this project with its alternatives which I shall be pleased to show to serious inquirers.

Archimedes Redivivus
(H. Lewis Curtis)

Sir,—It is clear that the "functional" splendours of the new Bankside Power Station will be gravely diminished if Wren's inverted bowl is allowed to remain where it is. Wren had no sense of "function": bowls are intended to hold liquids, not air. The obvious thing to do is to remove the Cathedral, sink it, upside down, elsewhere, and fill it with water. (The site of the Round Pond would be suitable, as people are accustomed to sailing boats there.) The inverted Cathedral would provide useful storage for London's water-supply, in case of further floods. Quinquennially it could be emptied for scouring, and students of architecture could then peer comfortably down at Wren's fine dome (now completely functional) without making their necks ache.

There are other schemes, I know, but this is the only one that holds water.

Your obedient servant, L. E. J.

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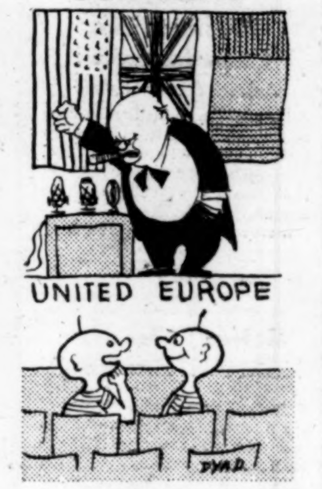

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SOLICITOR (full-time) of at least five years' standing reqd. for Durham area of Natl. Union of Mine-workers. Duties include Workman's Compensation and Social Insurance work, Arbitration Committee and County Court Advocacy, interpretation of agreements and rules and some conveyancing. Salary: £800×£30 to £1,000 p.a. plus exps. and travelling allowances. Written applics., giving date of birth, full details of qualifics. and exp. and of posts held, including dates, and accompanied by not more than three testimonials (copies only) to Appointments Office, Ministry of Labour and National Service, 1-6 Tavistock Sq. W.C.1, *Ref.* No. B.N.19. Only candidates selected for interview will be advised.

SUDAN Government require a Deputy Assistant Civil Secretary (Aviation), age not less than 25 years, for service in the Sudan to advise Civil Secretary on aviation matters coming before the Sudan Government. Candidates should have good educational qualifics., considerable flying exp., and should also have admin. exp. in aviation, civil or military. Appointment on Provident Fund Contract in the scale £E.560-630-700-770-840-920-1,000-1,080-1,170-1,270 (biennially)—£E.1,400 (after three years' max). Starting rate will be determined according to age, exp., and qualifics. No income tax is at present payable in the Sudan. At present a cost of living allowance at the rate of 35% of pay, subject to a max. of £E.15 per month is payable in respect of all salaries up to and including £E.1,200 p.a. A progressively reduced allowance is payable to officials on higher salaries. An outfit allowance at rate of £E.60 is payable on appointment provided the starting salary does not exceed £E.700 p.a. £E.1=£1 0s. *6d.* Free passage on appointment. Strict medical exam. Papers containing full information for candidates are obtainable from Sudan Agent in London, Wellington House, Buckingham Gate, S.W.1. Please mark envelopes "Air Secretary."

B.B.C. Applics. invited for post of Editor (News Bureau) in the Monitoring Service at Caversham, near Reading. Successful applicant will be reqd. to direct and organise the work of staff working on three shifts, who select and analyse news intercepted from overseas wireless stations for benefit of the Home, Foreign and Overseas Services of the B.B.C. Essential qualifics. include extensive exp. in the field of foreign news, and the ability to organise and direct the News Room. Eventual salary max. £1,360 p.a. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marked "Monitoring News," within 7 days. For acknowledgment enclose stamped add. envelope.

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SENIOR Assistant (Man or Woman) reqd. for the Legal and Social Insurance Dept. of National Union of Mine-workers in London. Duties include preparation of memoranda, drafting and interpretation of rules under supervision, publication of booklets of instruction and information to members. Salary: £9 2s. *6d.* p.w.+bonus of 2s. p.w. after two years' service, increasing to 15s. p.w. after twenty years' service. Permanent appointment but subject to one month's notice either side. Contrib. Pensions Scheme. Written applics., showing date of birth, details of qualifics., exp. and posts held (with dates), accompanied by copies of not more than three testimonials, should be addressed to Ministry of Labour and National Service, 1-6 Tavistock Sq. W.C.1, quoting Ref. No. J.K.183. Only candidates selected for interview will be advised.

METROPOLITAN Borough of Finsbury. Applics. invited from registered medical practitioners (Male or Female) for appointment of Assistant Medical Officer of Health, whose duties will be mainly in connection with maternity and child welfare work in Borough. Commencing sal. at rate of £800-£850 p.a. (according to qualifics. and exp.) and will rise by biennial increments of £50 to max. of £900. Cost of living bonus paid in addition. Candidates should have not less than 3 yrs.' exp. of their profession, together with special exp. in maternity and child welfare work. Preference given to applics. holding Diploma in Public Health. Applications, upon forms obtained upon personal applic., or by sending a s.a. foolscap envelope, must be returned, accompanied by copies of 3 recent testimonials, within next 21 days. John E. Fishwick, Town Clerk, Finsbury Town Hall, Rosebery Ave. E.C.1.

GOLD Coast. Graduates in Arts or Science, with Diploma in Education, or teaching exp., also Masters of Method, reqd. urgently for several teacher training colleges or secondary schools. Offers of temporary service will be considered. Applicants must be Protestant Church members, pref. Methodist, with a sense of missionary vocation and willing to accept missionary terms of service. For information apply to Rev. F. W. J. Cottrell, Methodist Missionary Socy., 25 Marylebone Rd. N.W.1.

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